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THE
MORAL PHILOSOPHY
OF
Courtship and Marriage.

DESIGNED AS A COMPANION TO
THE "PHYSIOLOGY OF MARRIAGE."

BY
WILLIAM A. ALCOTT, M. D.
AUTHOR OF "THE HOUSE I LIVE IN," ETC.

FIFTH EDITION.

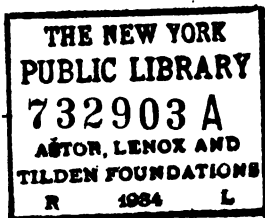
BOSTON:
JOHN P. JEWETT & COMPANY.
CLEVELAND, OHIO: H. P. B. JEWETT.

1859.

ENB

1931

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PHENIX BUILDING, BOSTON

JOHN P JEWETT
AND COMPANY
NEW YORK

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TO THE YOUNG OF BOTH SEXES.

"It is not good for man to be alone," is a declaration which is said to have been first made nearly six thousand years ago; and yet, in a practical point of view, up to the present hour, celibacy has been the order of the day. Marriage indeed there has been,—marriage in name; but the vast majority of both sexes, despite of names and forms, are still, in reality, alone.

Marriage, young reader, is a serious concern, and courtship, if possible, still more so: and as such, I have, in the following pages, endeavored to treat them. But do not be deterred, by this caution, from a careful perusal of the work, even to the end. Serious as the subject is, it has been my object to render my remarks, especially on the proper and needful qualifications for marriage, as inviting as the nature

of the case will admit, for which purpose I have introduced not a few familiar anecdotes, by way of illustration. I am, indeed, far from supposing I have exhausted my subject; but, if I have rendered the work a fit companion to the "Physiology of Marriage," my labors have not been wholly in vain.

JANUARY 1, 1857.

PART I.

Nature and Objects of Courtship and Marriage.

CHAPTER I.

IS MARRIAGE A DUTY?

MARRIAGE, or the union of the sexes for life, is not merely "honorable," it is indispensable. "It is not good for man to be alone," the first declaration of the great Creator's will, in regard to creatures made in his own image, was almost immediately followed by a second decree of equal importance and necessity, —one, indeed, which would seem to be a consequence of the first,— "Therefore shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh."

But it is not man alone, *as* man, that is required to avoid the solitary state. To bear the image of God requires a social nature; since God is social,—pre-eminently so. For, though we are told—I hardly know by what authority—that, during a long eter-

nity which preceded the creation of the globe we occupy, "Jehovah dwelt alone;" yet, we have also another and a different statement, and from better authority. "Let us make man"—and this is the language of the inspired record—implies council. In this instance, at least, Jehovah was not a "solitary." Woman, as a general rule, is no less under obligation to avoid the solitary or unsocial state, and to increase and multiply and replenish the earth, than her *liege lord*; and for similar reasons.

In this point of view, then, marriage becomes not only honorable, but a matter of duty. It is not, as a general rule, a thing which is optional with human beings. I have, indeed, often heard individuals say—especially some of our young women—that, if in any thing whatever the Creator has left people free, it is in regard to marriage. Now, that mankind are in the fullest sense free agents, no reasonable person will doubt; nor even that they are free to do wrong, if they choose so to do, as well as right. Nor will it for a moment be doubted, that, as free agents, we are permitted by the Creator to neglect matrimony, just as we are permitted to neglect exercise or pure air, or proper food and drink, if we choose to do thus. We may even go farther than this, and, under circumstances which seem to be very imperative, and difficulties which appear insurmountable, postpone marriage for a time, and yet be guiltless. But that a human being, of either sex, in any of the ordinary circumstances of

life, has a right to postpone this subject indefinitely, or forever,—that is, can do so without becoming guilty before God, the Creator, as well as culpable in regard to the great laws of social life,—is most stoutly and positively denied. We are as truly bound to marry, and to be help-meets to each other in the great work of perfecting our own character, and of elevating and perfecting the character of a rising family, for God and the world, as we are to eat, drink, sleep, labor, or pray.

For observe, if you please, what has already been affirmed, that marriage is intended to render us help-meets, or helpers, to each other. But helpers in regard to what? Why, of course, in carrying out the third great decree of high heaven with regard to man, viz: "Increase and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." We are to receive ourselves at the hands of God, just as the first pair did, as so much capital in business,—reverently speaking,—or so much stock in trade; and to make all the improvement or increase we possibly can. If this was not designed in the first issuing of the decree, it was certainly implied in the end. We may, in this way alone, "multiply" ourselves by our increased influence or efficiency, so that in carrying out the decree still further, that is numerically, we may "replenish the earth" with a race which has the physical, moral, and intellectual energy necessary to "subdue it."

The obligation to marry, I say, then, is the general

rule; the release from that rule the occasional exception; and the latter should only be made to favor particular, or, so to call them, aggravated circumstances. Marriage, I repeat, though it may be postponed for a time, must seldom, if ever, be indefinitely, and, without the existence of imperative difficulties, rejected.

When a young man neglects or refuses to marry, because he expects to be a soldier, or a missionary of the cross, or to be placed for a season in circumstances of exposure to severe and protracted trials or perils, —perhaps to cruel persecutions,—he may be justified in postponing matrimony. Not, indeed, indefinitely, like the devoted Catholic, who enters the supposed sacred inclosure to become a recluse for life; but only while the circumstances in which he is placed remain as they now are. He does not despise the Divine decree; on the contrary, in his heart he honors it, and only delays to comply with it for a period which he expects will be limited. The moment his peculiar situation changes, he hastens to comply with the heavenly injunction, as Paul would probably have advised the Corinthian converts to do, at any other time than one of particular peril and persecution.

A young woman, in feeble health, may sometimes very properly delay or postpone matrimony, and yet be guiltless; but may she postpone it forever? We might gladly excuse her, or at least, desire to do so,

when we duly consider her natural reserve and delicacy, and her strong filial affection; but will she—can she be—by Him who has declared the solitary state to be unfavorable and wrong?

Extreme poverty may also sometimes render delay justifiable; nay, it may even render such delay for a time—at least, occasionally—quite unavoidable. I do not, however, mean to admit that mere poverty where this is the only difficulty, always *requires* delay or postponement. Where the parties are fully agreed, the most extreme poverty is sometimes compatible with a large share of connubial happiness as the result. It is related by the celebrated John Bunyan, that his wife and he came together in matrimony, without so much household stuff as a single knife and fork; and the late Sydney Smith informs us that his wife, at marriage, had nothing but a set of teaspoons; while, for himself, he had not so much as that. And yet the results, in both these cases, were peculiarly happy. The parties were not only agreed, but perfectly content with their lot; and what Heaven and themselves had joined together, poverty could not—and I think *should* not—keep asunder.

I will not pause, here, to comment on any real or supposed substitutes, which have been proposed for the ancient forms of matrimony, but which, having emanated either from the ingenuity or the depravity of man, are, to say the least, of doubtful tendency. They all appear to me to come quite short of the

Divine intention. Marriage, in order to subserve any permanent or important purpose, must be regarded and attended to as a plain and simple duty; and no evasion, by him who wishes to obey God or serve mankind, should, for a moment, be either tolerated or encouraged.

The subject, thus viewed, like many others in the world which commend themselves to our attention, becomes a serious one. It has even its shades as well as its lights. But, though it is not divested wholly of the former, the latter greatly predominate. Why should it not be so, when we consider well the source from which it emanated? The Creator has kindly annexed pleasure to duty, everywhere else: why should it not be so here?

If we bring to the consideration of this subject the same candor and good sense which we are wont to apply in the investigation of other matters, I have not a doubt that we shall be guided to the right conclusions, and to the proper discharge of our respective duties concerning it. There is nothing about it which is naturally uninviting. Should there be found connected with it any law of repulsion, of one thing we may be certain, that it has some other than a Divine source. Heaven's law concerning it, as we may be well assured, is the law of attraction and cohesion, and not of repulsion.

CHAPTER II.

NATURE AND DESIGNS OF MARRIAGE.

THE legitimate and principal end and object of the marriage institution is to EDUCATE,—to train up a new generation. The world in which we live is a vast school of education,—a mighty theatre for the formation of character. Life, in any truly worthy point of view, is chiefly, if not wholly, preparatory.

When I say this, however, I do not mean to affirm that this world is the only school for education, in this general or large sense, which can be found in the great Jehovah's vast domain; for, of the state of things in other worlds we know, as yet, comparatively little. There are intimations in Scripture—if, indeed, they are not more than intimations—of responsibilities in other worlds, such as having the charge of cities (ten, five, or two), under a general superintendency; and do not responsibilities imply trial or trust? And must not these involve progress or decline of character, according as they are faithfully or unfaithfully discharged?

But then, by the term education, as here employed,

I mean, of course, something more than instruction in the mere elements of science or art, even in their more advanced departments. It is something more than a mere development and cultivation of the intellect. It is even something more than merely preceptive education of any kind. From the cradle to the grave, man's whole triple nature — physical, moral and intellectual — is the subject of education. His body is to be educated. His mind or intellect is to be educated. I grant, indeed, that these *are* educated in some sort; for, in our over-cultivated, not to say over-refined, state of society, education, or formation for good or for evil, is inevitable. We cannot escape it, if we would. Then the affections — the moral department of our nature — are to be awakened, guided, and elevated. In other words, the heart is to be educated. All this should, moreover, be done in such a manner that the superstructure may not only rise heavenward, but rise with the greatest possible rapidity and certainty.

But, though it be true that, in this point of view, our world is but a great school, — if you please, a preparatory school, — and all its amusements, studies, employments, and duties, but so many lessons in the hands of the Great Teacher, there are particular circumstances and conditions which are obviously more favorable to human progress than others. Such, pre-eminently, are the circumstances of the family; and hence, perhaps, a just foundation for the oft-repeated

saying,—“There is no school like the family school.” A sentiment, however, which in its essentials was first proclaimed in Eden six thousand years ago; for did not He who sent man into the world on purpose to be educated, understand most fully what sort of a school would be most needful to human progress and advancement,—when, in the decree that man should not live alone, the family institution was established?

But is it the education of the children of the family, alone, that marriage is designed to accomplish? By no means. The work of forming character, or of educating the human being, may very properly be subdivided. First, it requires the completion of the education of the partners themselves. Secondly, it points to the production, development, and cultivation of a new race. In matrimonial life we are not only to increase and multiply ourselves by doubling, trebling, and quadrupling our own physical, moral, and intellectual efficiency, but we are also to increase and multiply the race numerically. Thirdly, we are bound to see that these increased members of society,—whether within our own little family limits or beyond them,—are placed, like ourselves, under the great law of progress.

Marriage, thus considered, in its broadest, noblest aspects, indicates something more than the correct education of four, or six, or ten children; or even the correct education of these and the individuals from

whom they emanate. This is indeed a great work, but not the whole. It more than indicates, it asserts, in language quite unmistakable, as well as highly imperative, a trio of duties,—to the parties themselves mutually; to the children; and to the surrounding world. Nor can the education of any individual, of either sex, be justly regarded as complete,—a truly liberal education,—such an one as God the Creator contemplated, till he has been subjected to these three forms of influence, or, in other words, to these three departments of the great Divine school.

How exceedingly important, then, if these suggestions are well founded, does the union for life of the two sexes become? Yet, alas! how often is it misunderstood, abused, and desecrated! How seldom, if ever, does it come up to its native dignity! At first thought, one cannot but wonder—such have been its numerous perversions and abuses—why it has not, long ago, ceased to exist, and our world reverted to its original chaos. Perhaps its existence and acknowledged value, despite of the Goth and Vandal attacks it has suffered in nearly every age, are no mean proof, were such proof needed, of its high origin and glorious destination.

How low and how unworthy also are those notions, so exceedingly common and increasing, that marriage is little more than a merely physical concern, a mere contrivance for human gratification! Just as if the decree imposed at the beginning, by high heaven,

had respect only to a little sensual enjoyment! That God has graciously annexed pleasure to every known duty of his intelligent creatures,—and to marriage among the rest,—has already been admitted; but our error lies in mistaking, for an end, what is only designed as a means.

Nor is the mistake much less common or less reprehensible, that marriage is a mere facility for playing the money-game; or, in other words, for money-making. Yet such is certainly the frequent practical estimate of this Heaven-appointed institution. Such a view, however, of matrimonial alliances, when it predominates, is more than desecrating,—it is positively detestable.

I will not say, of course, that, in entering into marriage, every pecuniary consideration is to be left entirely out of view,—much less to be despised,—for it is not so. What I would gladly interdict is, that over-estimate of money-getting, as the grand *ultimatum* of human existence, which perverts this semi-sacred institution from the original intention of Him who formed it; and which tends to convert the temple of domestic life, not indeed to a den of thieves, but to a mere business transaction,—a mere partnership in dollars and cents.

Nor is that a worthy end, in considering the subject of marriage, which practically degrades it to a mere instrumentality for introducing the parties and their families into the arena of folly and fashion. I know

well how difficult it often is to make a clear and broad line of demarcation here, as well as in the preceding case, between a due regard to conventional law, or the law of custom,—such a regard, I mean, for the feelings of others, as a proper charity may require of us,—and that blind devotion to the mandates of a most capricious and tyrannical, not to say contemptible, fashion, which so universally prevails. Still, I think that the distinction can and must be made. We are never to lose sight of the great and legitimate ends of this institution ; and, whenever we find that, instead of educating us in the best possible manner for the great future of our being, it is only bringing us into mere slavery to custom and fashion, it is high time for us to place the latter quite in the background. Nothing should be permitted so to enlist or enslave us, in this matter, as to obscure our mental and moral vision, or tend to defeat the great Creator's purposes.

Grant, as we must, that, however imperfectly the great leading designs of matrimony may have been understood, or its benevolent intention regarded,—and in spite, too, of its many abuses and perversions,—marriage has done more, in all times and countries, for the advancement of the human race, in all that really and truly refines and elevates, than all other institutions in the world, the church itself not excepted ; still, it is not to be doubted that it might and would have done infinitely more, had its great and legitimate and heavenly ends been always duly considered and religiously adhered to.

And, in this same point of view, how little — how positively contemptible — do those efforts appear, whether national or individual, which tend to lessen the sanctity of the marriage obligation, or lower the standard estimate of its objects and duties! But I have adverted to this subject already. I have as little time to parley with such abuses, as I have disposition to stoop so low, in attacking or contemning them, as to be exposed to the danger of making myself contemptible. Marriage and the family institution, despite of human weakness and wickedness, as Cowper has affirmed of the pulpit, —

“Must stand, acknowledged while the world shall stand, •
The most important and effectual guard,
Support, and ornament of virtue’s cause,” —

until “the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll;” nay, for aught I know, they shall be maintained, in their true intent and spirituality, as long as eternity itself shall endure. In any event, no Divine “Ukase” to the contrary has ever yet been made known to us.

But, in order that marriage may have its perfect work, according to the Divine intention, it is exceedingly important that the parties should be trained to correct views on the particular points we are considering. This, however, is so far from being the case at present, — at least, to any considerable extent, — that he would be much more in accordance with truth

who should affirm that we are trained not to think of it at all.

To make passing daily inquiries, according to the custom of the times, who have been recently married, or about to be, or who are engaged to each other ; to read the newspaper carefully in this particular, though they should find little else in its columns to attract their attention or accord with their perverted taste ; and to pass an occasional and often idle joke on the subject, is nearly all the education, on this topic, which the vast majority of our families—including some of the best—ever receive. But of what real practical utility is such an education as this? What just ideas of matrimony—its legitimate object and end—are thus obtained? As well might the current conversation of mankind about religious things serve to recommend and exalt religion itself, in the eyes of the rising generation.

Parental example should, indeed, be the great and more effectual means of diffusing just information on this subject, and of leading to a just estimate of the value of matrimony. Nevertheless, precept may still have its uses. And is there anything, direct relations and duties to God himself not excepted, about which judicious parents could more profitably hold sweet converse with their children, at least occasionally? Is there anything which, to the young of suitable age, would be more acceptable? How strange—how wholly unnatural, not to say unreasonable—the

reserve, the shyness, and even the coolness on the one hand, with which not a few, even of our best families, treat the subject, and the lightness and contempt with which it is sometimes regarded, on the other!

The family, as a place of general instruction and inculcation, has, as I believe, been hitherto greatly undervalued. In becoming the great and special school of Divine Providence, it includes not only all the other instrumentalities of education and just elevation, particularly those pertaining to the moral and social nature of man, but the study of elementary science itself. I do not believe in giving up all instruction, even by set lessons, to what are usually called, by way of eminence, *the* schools; but which do not, intrinsically, merit that high appellation. They give us, after all, little more than the mere keys of science. They can do little more than this, if they would. They can no more than enable us, at future and greater leisure, to unlock and appropriate to practical purposes the multiplied and invaluable and ever inviting treasures which God has in reserve for us. Let the family, then, be regarded as not only a school, in the general sense of its efficiency in forming general character, but as a place of scientific instruction and elevation. I have seen such families; and hope to live long enough to see many more. They are, of themselves, so many heavens here below; and they are, perhaps, the most correct intimation to be soon expected of the heaven that is above.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE ENDS OF MARRIAGE ARE TO BE SECURED; OR RATIONAL COURTSHIP.

THE great ends of marriage, as set forth in the preceding chapter, are to be secured, in part,—but of course in part only,—in the progress of bestowing and receiving, mutually, those little attentions to which we have usually applied the term courtship. I say, here, *mutually*, because practically both sexes, in the interviews alluded to, are accustomed to strive to win the affection and confidence of those to whom they feel a degree, greater or less, of attachment, even though custom has greatly varied the modes of expressing it. The term courtship, however, as usually in practice defined, does by no means necessarily include a desire of securing the noblest ends of matrimony. As now generally conducted, it is at best a mere farce; a mere idle effort at display; or, perhaps I should say, to sell one's self at the highest possible price. For, in these interviews of the sexes, is any one expected to appear in a true garb or character? Is there one in a hundred, in the ordinary routine of this phase of social life, who ever thinks

of giving or receiving visits, as a means of ascertaining whether the opposite party possesses the requisite qualifications for aiding in carrying out the Divine purposes in regard to the marriage institution? Is there one parent in a hundred, even, — I mean, now, in practical life, — who considers this as one of the great ends, not to say the greatest, for which the young of both sexes should associate?

In the first or elementary family, where both sexes are to be found, it often happens that they study the character of each other: why should they not, when they meet in the larger or more general family? And it is a most remarkable fact, that so large a proportion of the families of our globe should embrace more or fewer of both sexes; and does it not indicate very clearly one part of our duty, viz., to train these two sexes, as far as possible, in the society of each other? Besides giving, as it were, a turn to the character, so that the purer and more correct sentiments and feelings, and the wiser conduct, which are there cherished, may, as a consequence, be carried through life with us, it affords us a most excellent opportunity for acquiring the art of observation without *espionage*, — an art which prepares the way for that intimacy and acquaintance abroad which is alone worthy of the name.

It is in the same view that I heartily approve of all those modern arrangements, whether in our primary or public schools, or in our colleges and our

universities, — nay, in every condition and form of social, juvenile life, where it is in any degree admissible, — by means of which the sexes are brought together as nearly as possible in the shape of a more extended family. I would have them meet, as a family, daily, and as many times a day as the circumstances will possibly admit, both at the regular meals at the table, and in classes at recitations, as well as concerts, lectures, parties, etc.

Of course, I do not say that, in every one of our institutions of learning, the exercises should be attended by both sexes indiscriminately; for certain professional schools — perhaps a few others — may form exceptions to the universality of this rule. But I do say that, throughout the whole course of school education and instruction, from the cradle to the grave, and from the infant school to the university, it should be our steady aim, as wise governors of the young, to bring them together, more or less frequently, for more or fewer general exercises; and, above all to have them together at the hours of devotion and of meals, as well as at a select portion of their amusements.

I am by no means ignorant that all this has been objected to, even by good men; and still is so. But are their objections grounded on the observation of facts, or are they the assumptions of mere theory? Are they experimental or hypothetical? I have seen the workings of the thing in practice; and have com-

pared the effects in the two cases, and can hardly be mistaken in the conclusions to which my mind has arrived. The farther we can remove ourselves and our children from the *convent system*, in these and all kindred particulars, in a world like ours, the greater will be the gain, both to individual and social happiness.

My great and leading aim, in all this, would be to preserve that simplicity of character which is found in our best families, and which should be in all; and to preserve the young from that hollowness—that masked or artificial appearance—which is at the present day so common, and which is the more surprising from the fact that the young of both sexes fully understand it, and yet, in practice and reality, mutually consent to deceive and be deceived.

It may serve to show more fully my meaning, at this precise point, if I relate here an anecdote of every-day life; which, though not new, and perhaps originally without any foundation in fact, as its basis, contains within it a very wholesome moral.

A certain young man was in the habit of calling frequently on the family of a female friend; not, indeed, under cover of night, darkness, or seclusion, as was formerly so common, but in the afternoon, during those hours which are usually devoted to household and other employments. It was in those golden days of Solomon's golden domestic establishments, when the orthodox standard of female excellence required that

house-keepers should be trained to the sublime act of taking hold, with their hands, of the distaff. I have represented it to have been in the by-gone golden age; but fancy and dissimulation had already begun to steal their march upon the social family circle. He always found the young woman whose acquaintance he sought, and whose character, as it would seem, he was desirous of studying, sitting at the distaff; and for a time could not help admiring her industry. But, being led at last to the suspicion that all was not what it appeared to be, he one day contrived to deposit his penknife in the contents of the distaff, and to take his leave without discovery. After the lapse of a month or so, he called again, and found the young woman, as before, at the distaff. He inquired for the penknife. No one had seen it. He was sure he left it there, he said. On examining the flax on the distaff, the knife dropped out, and at once revealed the secret, and dissolved the charm.

This anecdote, I say, may perhaps serve to show us when and where and how the present hollowness and duplicity of social life commenced; but not when or where it will end. At this day, nearly every one, when in the society of those he is most desirous to please, endeavors to be the reverse of what, in an age which I have called a golden one, was regarded as commendatory. That honest and patient, but active, industry which it was once thought would attract attention and insure esteem, is now deemed almost, if

not quite, dishonorable. That simplicity of character which once prevailed, at least to a greater extent than now, has given place to the notion that an industrious, open, and truthful life is mean and degrading. Young women now, were spinning in vogue, instead of flying to the spinning-wheel, or to the broom and duster, as a recommendation, on the approach of a friend of the opposite sex, would fly from both; or, if so unfortunate as to be caught spinning or sweeping, would blush to excess, as if conscious of having committed some capital crime. Even the really industrious must seem *not* to be so, they appear to suppose, in order to gain the meed of public approbation.

And worse still: the knife found buried in the distaff, in these days and times, would hardly be deemed a disgrace. It would be but an indication of skill, or a game at which both sexes can play; and which, it is universally expected, will be played. Hence, perhaps, at least in part, the fact that marriage has been so often represented as a lottery. But it is not a lottery, in the fullest sense. It is, as I have elsewhere stated, a game, — a mere matter of chance and skill at wire-pulling, or ball-rolling. Shakspeare has said:

“All the world’s a stage,

And all the men and women merely players.”

But I think this couplet should, at the present day, be so modified as to read — though with less of smoothness — as follows:

“All the world's a gaming table,
And all the men and women merely gamesters.”

Especially is it so with all the men and women of the world, or nearly all, in regard to marriage.

If these things are not so, how happens it that hardly a young person can be found,—if indeed an old one,—who does not endeavor to *play a part*, when in the society of others, especially of the opposite sex? How is it that his countenance, his dress, his attitude, his motions, his conversation, and, in one word, his whole conduct, when out of the precincts of his own private family circle, are not his own, but are all borrowed? How is it that, in every thing and at every step, he is to be deciphered, translated, or interpreted? How is it that it is nowhere the study of the young to know each other's true character, but rather to conceal their own, and to connive at the same concealment in others?

Nearly all which pertains to what is now called the society of the sexes, beyond the family precincts of the individuals themselves, is obviously and greatly wrong. It is all based on the general intentions above alluded to, of display and dissimulation. From the very first moment in which an attachment springs up in either sex toward the other, they meet, not to become truly acquainted with each other, but really and truly to see who can play the best game of deception. Their whole character is often the very reverse of what it appears to be. They are but an unknown or foreign

language, or an array of hieroglyphics, or a farce; perhaps, more properly, the latter. Shakspeare's plays are not more truly a farce than the modern society of the sexes. The young, I repeat, know all this; their parents and friends know it; everybody knows it; and yet everybody, or almost everybody, connives at it; or, at most, only laughs at it.

But it must not longer be so. The farce of our pseudo modern courtship must give way to such a rational intercourse of the young as is happily adapted to enable them to understand each other, in a true, and not a factitious, light. The conversation, whether of the youthful or the adult circle, must not be such as to require translating or deciphering. The dress must not be intended to deceive, nor the conversation to mislead. There must, let me say once more for all, be no studied concealment, on the part of either the young people themselves or their parents.

The latter must not only avoid practising or encouraging anything, either in word or conduct, which is artful or insincere, but they must take steady and persevering pains to prevent any falsehood or dissimulation from so much as having a germination 'in the youthful mind. To this end they should—I will even say they *must*—encourage the society of the young, in every possible rational way, especially by inviting to their houses the members of such other families as they may deem worthy. The young will then enjoy the society of each other, and may ex-

hibit themselves to each other and see each other as they really and truly are. Not, of necessity, under cover of night or darkness, or above all, not at a very late hour of the evening. Not at balls, assemblies, or concerts, from which their parents are practically excluded, and where much exists which is artificial, if not objectionable. Not, of course, in solitary groups or couples, or in seclusion or darkness. Nor should any of these meetings of the young be understood to exclude older persons, above all, parents and elder brothers and sisters. On the contrary, it should be distinctly understood that they are open and free to all persons whatever, who conduct themselves decently. Indeed, if the whole thing is properly managed, the young will not desire to exclude the old. What is called *green* old age, and especially *middle* age, will even be in demand in these little circles. Age, in short, in families properly educated, and properly treated in regard to the matter we are now considering, will, *as such*, hardly ever be thought of.

An objection is sometimes brought against the custom of meeting in the afternoon in preference to the evening, that it is a waste of time. Or, if no objection should be started, of this sort, in words, it is, at least, felt to be an objection. Hence it is, perhaps, that the young have so often been crowded, in this particular, into the evening,—and the evening hours have been protracted to midnight ones. Hence, too, as I suppose, has arisen the public and

promiscuous ball and assembly, in which health, if not morals, is so often sacrificed to no purpose, at least so far as the formation of character is concerned. And hence, too,—far worse still,—the clandestine conduct of many young men, who, but for this unnatural and unreasonable repression, would never have stolen away, without parental permission,—and even in opposition to known parental wishes,—or perhaps crept out at the window of their sleeping-rooms, in order to have access to those places of amusement which are still more objectionable.

Parents and all older persons must, in the first place, remember that they have themselves once been young, and must govern themselves accordingly. And then, too, it should be understood by all those who have imbibed the notion that it is a loss of time to give up an afternoon or half an afternoon occasionally, and, as its substitute, use the evening, that the loss of time is as great in the latter case as in the former. For nature will not be cheated out of her rights, if she can help it; and, if the sleep is diminished in the early part of the night, it will be made up the next day, either by clinging longer to the bed, or by dragging round with less than the usual amount of energy, after having risen. There is, therefore, no moral, social, or economical reason for preferring the evening to the afternoon, in these circumstances, but what is founded on the grossest ignorance of human nature in general, or an equally culpable ignorance of ourselves.

These afternoon associations of the young, not grudgingly *permitted*, but graciously and kindly volunteered, by parents and older friends themselves, when they are begun in early life, made common and natural, and continued, year after year, through all the changes of the family, and at the same time properly improved, would result in a very different state of things from what we now see,—one far more favorable to present enjoyment, as well as to general virtue and happiness. Matrimony, too, whenever and wherever it should grow out of such circumstances, and should finally be consummated, would be so far removed from the spirit of game, or chance, or hazard, that it would, in its results, approximate very closely to what the great Creator, by his earlier and later decrees, so obviously intended. It will then be the object of the young, at every age and in all circumstances, to know and to be known, rather than to deceive and be deceived.

Most happy will be that state of society which shall permit a neighborhood to be, in this respect, at least, like a well-ordered family. Most happy will the time be, when, during the long years—often made, by our folly and weakness, unnaturally and unnecessarily long to the young—of youth and adolescence, they are habitually learning, with the aid of much observation, each others' character; and forming, in a rational and intelligent manner, those attachments which shall last as long as time shall last, and perhaps till time itself shall be no more.

On this account, were it for no other, I have sometimes most anxiously desired the full realization of that state of society which has been so often, and yet for the most part so unsuccessfully, attempted,—at least since the days of the apostles,—in which all things are held in common. I mean here a state of things not unlike what exists among the Shakers; or, perhaps, rather, among the followers of Rapp and Fourier,—for these last do not reject marriage. And it seems to me greatly to be regretted, that so many of these efforts or experiments have been made in circumstances which have brought upon their leaders not merely the charge of being a generation or two in advance of their times, but of downright fanaticism. Pity it is, that other Christians besides Peter, and James, and John, have not, in good earnest, taken hold of this matter. Such communities, established on truly Christian principles, and conducted in a truly Christian spirit, would afford the very best opportunity for learning character which can be found beyond the precincts of the regular individual family, of which we can now have any conception. They would, indeed, to all practical purposes, be as so many larger but well-ordered families. Or they might, if preferred, be as so many Christian churches.

But whether these associations, or communities, or churches can or cannot—in any future and more favored period of the world's history—be fully realized, I do not feel fully competent to predict.

I am no prophet, or son of a prophet. Of one thing, at least, we may be certain, viz., that the family will remain as long as the world shall stand; for, as it is with the other Divine institutions, the gates of hell can never prevail against it, to its ultimate and full extinction. Let it, then, in this, no less than in all other respects, have its full and perfect and most desirable work.

It is sometimes insisted, not only that marriage *is*, and always *must be*, a matter of mere chance or hazard, but that it *ought* to be so. The best way for parents to do, we are told, is neither to do nor say any thing about it to their children, leaving the whole thing to chance, or, at most, to what they sometimes call—it seems to me most impiously—Divine Providence. But they who say this are often among the very first to complain, when it is too late, of the results.

The word *impiously*, which I have felt myself called upon to use, in this connection, is hardly severe enough. But I am tired of charging our neglect and indolence—that is to say, the results of our own neglect and indolence—upon our heavenly Father. Yet we do this, in a thousand ways. As far as a thing goes well, we take the credit of it, or at least give no credit to any other source; but if it goes ill, we call it Divine Providence, and pretend to submit to it because it is divinely ordered! I do not mean to say, or to intimate, that we are conscious of acting thus wickedly;

but as the result of habit and training we do it, especially in the matter now under consideration.

It is to prevent—in part at least—any necessity of complaint afterward, by precluding every possible temptation, that I urge, with all my powers, the importance of early parental co-operation and parental effort. It is to forestall and prevent those ills which many a miserable parent would, often, afterward—perhaps when forever too late—give a thousand worlds, if he had them, to cure. If there be, in truth, a subject which demands the reconsideration of parents, especially those who have decided in favor of chance and hap-hazard in matrimonial concerns, it is this. There should be a full recognition, in this most important concern, of the quaint out somewhat antiquated maxim, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

But, while I plead the necessity and practicability of prevention in this particular, I am not, as the reader may have already discovered, fully prepared to make the Jewish Jacob, of old, an exact model, in the manner of selecting a companion for life; for, in truth, I never could admire a portion of the early life and character of this prince of Yankees,—one whom it required almost a whole lifetime for an Almighty Father to discipline into a holy and perfect man. And yet, it is by no means certain that the mutual attachment which subsisted between Jacob and Rachel that proved, pre-eminently, a means of his purification

and sanctification, may not have been the legitimate result of his twenty-one long years of hard service in the family of her father, Laban. This certainly gave the young couple a period of unusual length for the study of each others' character. They may have thus come together well prepared to afford that mutual aid in the great work of education and instruction,—in the work, I mean, of forming character,—of which both may have been wise enough to perceive the necessity, but of which Jacob, alone, in his own way, with the true Yankee spirit deeply imbedded in his very nature, might have forever despaired of attaining without such a course of discipline. It may also have been as beneficial to Rachel as to Jacob.

But, without expecting, or, above all, demanding that the young should actually reside together under the same roof, and in the same family (at least as a general rule), in order to understand each other, I must still say, happy is the individual, of either sex, who has opportunities like those afforded Jacob, even though it were but *one* of his *sevens*, for observing and studying out the character of an individual on whom his affections are becoming fixed. And happy are they who even enjoy seven, or ten, or fourteen years of daily observation, as it were, on each other's character, by reason of neighborhood-contiguity, or such other favorable circumstances as can hardly fall to one's lot, except in a very dense population.

Within my own wrangle of observation,—which

certainly is not very limited, — those marriages have seemed to be most happy and useful which have grown out of a long residence, either under the same roof, or in very close proximity; and those least so, — I mean as a general rule, — which were the result of a momentary, or at least very limited, acquaintance. I have in my mind's eye, at this very moment, one or two cases of the former kind. One is that of a young farmer, who had been employed by the same individual for years, and had been always treated as a member of the family; and who had proved faithful, industrious, and worthy. As his "reward," he received the daughter of his employer; and the reward was a rich one. The other is the case of a young merchant, who had boarded for a year or two in the family of a clergyman, and who, at length, married his eldest daughter. The young woman, in the latter case, was at first averse to his proposals; but a longer acquaintance with him finally changed her views; and the result was an attachment strong and mutual, and a union acceptable and happy. The marriage of old school companions is, as a general rule, equally fortunate and happy.

It is not to be denied that, here and there, a few marriages which have been the result of sudden attachments have proved happy. But such instances, most obviously, are the exception and not the general rule; though, from their striking character, they are particularly noticeable, and hence are apt to be mag-

nified into the general rule. Besides,—and I have already adverted to the fact,—marriage, even in the worst circumstances, is productive, as a whole, of more virtue and happiness than celibacy; and this, too, notwithstanding a general belief of the young to the contrary. It is only by compulsion, as it were, that we learn its blessedness. Whatever God ordains must make happy, in spite of human ignorance, delinquency, and error.

The question will perhaps be asked, and with no little emphasis and anxiety, whether, in thus making the whole of domestic life, so far as opportunity offers, a season and place for the study of character and qualities, we do not encourage the young to be continually acting the spy upon each other; and whether such watching or spying, by mere boys and girls, would not exert a very unfavorable influence upon themselves. My reply to such a question would be, as I have elsewhere suggested, that I do not mean to encourage acting the spy at all. To have our eyes open to the true character of our associates, so as to understand them just as they reveal themselves in looks, conversation, and conduct, is one thing; and is, for aught I can see, proper and commendable, and even desirable. To act the spy is quite the reverse.

As to having the young, while mere boys and girls, commence and pursue the study of each other as a principal if not predominant study, it is certainly right that it should be so. Our young people begin to have

those attachments which belong to the sexes, much earlier than many people suppose. Those preferences are sometimes perceptible in mere infancy. It is even affirmed — though I have not verified it by my own observation — that, in selecting the doll, or the sugar toy, that which represents the opposite sex is usually preferred. In any event, it is no unusual thing for boys of ten or twelve years of age — long, I mean, before the appearance of puberty — to feel a very strong attachment for an individual of the opposite sex, and to indulge a strong determination on a future union. They may have very inadequate ideas of conjugal life; they simply think of the individual for whom they feel an attachment as a social being; and resolve that, if they ever marry, it must be in this particular direction.

I have been credibly informed of the existence of quite a large number of these attachments, and have myself been acquainted with a few. It is not to be denied that those little attachments, so early and readily formed, are often and easily broken up by the force of changing circumstances; but so are many of those of later life. I heard of a young man of eastern Massachusetts, — and from a source in which I placed great confidence, — who was five times deeply in love in the short space of two years. Now, I am sure no child of ten or twelve years of age, or who was younger still than that, would forget his attachments much sooner than this adult did his.

Nor are these little attachments, as I verily believe, wholly without their advantages, even when they do not prove to be abiding. The story of John Newton is, as I suppose, generally known. While engaged in a seafaring life, at the very immature age of sixteen or eighteen years, he was, as he assures us, already engaged, at least in heart and spirit, to a young woman in England. And how many a time, says he, while I have been in the most imminent danger of falling, through temptation, in foreign ports, I have been preserved by the sudden thought: If I should yield to the temptation, and she should come to know it, what would she think of me?

Now, human nature is essentially the same at all ages, and in all circumstances; and if, at the age of sixteen or eighteen, such attachments are useful in preserving us from a vicious course, are they not of more or less value at every age, and in all circumstances? And if they are greatly useful, by thus encouraging virtue and dissuading from vice, why should they be objectionable?

It is, in truth, my most deliberate conviction that these little attachments, thus early formed, are not only harmless, but of great utility. I wish they had existence and influence much oftener than they now have. What if they were frequently changed or transferred,—not indeed, from mere fancy, but for both reasons,—would they not still be highly serviceable while they lasted?

Some persons may say: "But you make the season of courtship a very long one. You would not like to have marriage—the consummation of these attachments—take place, it would seem, till the parties have arrived at maturity; and yet you would have the season of courtship commence in the very years of childhood. Would you then have this season protracted, as in some cases it thus might be, to a term of fifteen or twenty years?"

I would discard, and, if practicable, I would in the first place utterly abolish, this term courtship,—its employment is so spiritless and unworthy. I would, indeed, have the young seek to gain the affections of each other, but not by mere fits and starts, or on particular occasions. They should seek to do this by endeavoring to be, rather than to *seem* to be. And yet, I would gladly have them think much more, and endeavor with much more earnestness than they now do, to learn the character of each other, and thus ascertain whether or not they are adapted, mutually, to unite in the great work for which it was the Divine intention they should, in due time, be prepared. They should be early taught that their future well-being and earthly happiness require, for their efficiency and perpetuity, a most intimate and exalted friendship. Especially is this true of that friendship which looks toward matrimony. It would seldom happen that true friendship and a solid and real sexual attachment would diminish by the lapse of even fifteen or twenty

years. And yet, what if it did? Where would be the loss?

I will not—for I must not—dissemble in this matter. I will not, in the smallest degree, conceal my real sentiments. I believe the cause of virtue and morality—I might even say of piety—would be greatly advanced by having the whole period of childhood, youth, and adolescence, a season, as it were, of preparation for marriage, under parental supervision and direction. Nay, more: I most confidently believe it will one day be regarded as such. Most devoutly, therefore, do I labor and pray for, and expect, a favored period in the world's history, when it will be one great and earnest aim in all social education, to study and learn the adaptation of the sexes to each other, and thus early to lay a solid foundation for such marriages as would prove a blessing to the parties concerned,—the parents no less than their children,—the neighborhoods in which they are to reside, and the world. Is such an expectation groundless? Is it visionary? Is it irrational? Or is it well founded?

CHAPTER IV.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF BEING IN LOVE.

WHAT, then! it will doubtless be asked, does your philosophy of courtship *explain* away all courtship? Do you make the subject of marriage, and all that pertains to it, a mere concern of the head or intellect, to the entire exclusion of all that has to do with the heart? Must we, in your estimation, utterly discard all that in former times was called being in love?

But, the truth is, that I am so far from proposing any thing else as a substitute for the attachment here referred to, that it is part and parcel, so to speak, of my machinery, to make the best possible preparation for it; or, in other words, to lay a foundation on which alone it can securely stand.* I would, indeed, have sexual love *directed* by the head, but never originated by it. The power which impels is one thing; that which guides the helm, quite another.

There are various kinds of human love, such as the love of self—of relations—of the opposite sex—of

* For some of the thoughts of this chapter I am indebted to an English work of considerable merit, entitled "Treatise on Happiness."

special friends—of country—of children—and of God ; nay, there is even such a thing as love for the inferior animals, and for plants. Perhaps the most universal of these loves are those of self and of children ; while the most powerful, and perhaps the most truly influential, is the love of sex. Sometimes a very advanced piety may render the love of God more influential than any other ; but this last, I am sorry to say, is a rare case.

Sexual love arises, as we are accustomed to say, from a view of bodily or mental excellencies. The object beloved is like a magnet ; while the admirer, like the metallic body, is drawn towards it. The more violent feeling of this kind may be termed an emotion, or passion ; but, when it becomes constant as in a state of marriage it always should be, it is an affection or habit.

There is not a little mystery in the workings of the human mind, particularly when it is under the influence of this principle ; and yet there is nothing about it which is really and truly supernatural. Yet, if this is so, and if our perception will carry us far enough, we may explain it. Let us, then, make the attempt.

In a state of nature, among uncivilized beings, love is merely sensual. Women are sometimes seized and carried off by force. On other occasions, a plurality of wives is allowed. In both cases, genuine love is either absent, or its influence very trifling.

When a feeling of admiration or pleasure refers to the mind only, it is pure or abstract love; but when it refers to the body, it is animal, and resembles what is felt by brutes. The union of the two constitutes sexual love, as it *should* be. This two-fold love—this love of body and mind both—is the only kind of love that can be depended on, as a guide to durable enjoyment.

Love of sex is excited in various ways. Among these are pleasing manners, an amiable disposition, and the music of speech or of song. Sometimes the feeling is produced by intrinsic excellence. Occasionally it happens that the pleasing sensations which arise from other objects are reflected on a person, and, by being concentrated there, make him or her the more attractive. Not a few individuals have become enamored by a mere description; while others, still, have conjured up in their minds, and mentally worshipped, an imaginary beauty. The representation of an elegant woman in marble, or on canvas, will charm the beholder. A young man, among the ancients, is said to have been so much affected by an excellent statue of Venus, that he was unable to rest, unless he was continually gazing at it.

The influence of this passion, I have said, is universal. Mankind read of it; hear of it; and, as they grow to maturity, they feel it. It is natural, therefore, that it should form a constant and fascinating subject for the employment of the thoughts, especially

when other engagements are absent; and this is doubtless one reason why idle persons are more subject to romantic love than those who are industrious. But do not misunderstand me. Do not conclude that training to industry would banish this attachment altogether, for this were impossible. It is grounded in our very nature. It would regulate and restrain it, only; but never subdue it. It would *steady*, but at the same time, *as it should*, strengthen it.

The imagination of most persons is frequently employed in tracing out forms of beauty, and in connecting them with mental accomplishments. We imagine ourselves in the company of the beautiful and the fascinating, delighting ourselves with smiles, listening to the strains of a melodious voice, and admiring principles of virtue, which, like beautiful flowers peeping out from foliage, continually excite delight.

Some particular form is admired, and some particular disposition preferred, and we wait until we discover a counterpart in society. If we fail, we take some reality and adorn it, in order to make it agree with our imagination. Hence, not at all unfrequently, love is blind; for it fancies beauty where none really exists.

When, however, a person is seen who somewhat resembles the image which has been formed in the mind, with which delightful feelings have been connected, and from which thoughts have arisen of failure and success, of hope and fear, of joy and sor-

row, of a happy connection and a heart-rending separation, and these burst forth in one powerful and indefinable feeling, it constitutes the sensation of what we call sudden love, or love at first sight. Accidental circumstances may contribute, very much, to a powerful impression; either in calling forth the previous sensations of the mind, or in decking attractively the present object of attention.

There are periods when the charms of a female, which, under ordinary circumstances, would produce no effect, will produce a most powerful impression. As the scattered rays of the sun may fall upon the earth without producing any apparent warmth, and yet, if they are so concentrated as to be brought to bear upon a point, they may ignite the substance on which they act, so the discovery of one good quality now, and another then, will produce but little effect, while a concentration of the whole will leave a powerful impression.

If love be very powerful or violent at first, it proves that the inclination of the person was chiefly sensual, for bodily qualities may be immediately perceived. Whereas mental charms are not so easily discovered, unless the effect is occasioned by the expression of the countenance, rather than by the form; for this may arise from a cultivated and amiable mind.

First impressions are frequently lessened in their force, by longer acquaintance; for, the eye having perceived physical beauty, the imagination will some-

times paint mental excellency, which, on a nearer observation, will be found to have no existence. On the other hand, if persons be really worthy of attraction, new beauties will continually arise; a mutual acquaintance will generate mutual love; and, these being gradually produced, will probably flourish during the whole period of life.

The interchange of kind offices; the happiness arising from the company of each other; the bashful timidity of the softer sex; the pleasures of an occasional smile; the mutual sympathy which arises when friends are sour or repulsive; the interchange of joys and sorrows; the expression of hopes and fears, with the delightful anticipations of future blessedness,—all these generate love, and make courtship an interesting and delightful engagement, and the more so in proportion as it is without affectation, and unconnected with any thing which is purely factitious.

Much repulsiveness, if natural, implies disgust; and, as no one should submit to it before marriage, lest he should be compelled to do so forever afterward, it is good reason for proceeding no further. If it arises from affectation, it is deceit; and a person who will deceive in one thing, will be likely to do so in another. On the other hand, much forwardness, especially an apparent anxiety, on the part of the female, for a matrimonial union, is inconsistent with natural modesty. A little diffidence will attract; much fondness will repel.

An excess of the feeling of love will generally occasion unhappiness. The mind and body are so constituted, that any powerful feeling of anxiety, sorrow, or delight, will be injurious. A person, in these circumstances, becomes melancholy and absent; his countenance pale; his eyes, though lively, are sunk; his nervous system is irritable; and if, to all this, disappointment is added, the effect may be insanity or even death.

' The extreme of romantic love, as I have elsewhere observed, seldom arises except in a mind unoccupied by interesting engagements. The remark may be applicable, in some good degree, to all conditions and sorts of sexual love. Lord Bacon says, "You may observe that, among all the great and worthy persons, there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love; which shows that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion."

Matrimony should never be made a speculation for obtaining wealth; nor should it, on either side, be made a matter of compulsion. Mutual love is the only guide to connubial happiness. If sexual love were as disinterested as some have supposed, then its object would be merely the happiness of the other; but if the other were disinclined to a union, the person would cheerfully sacrifice his own comfort, and discontinue his addresses. But so far is love from being disinterested, that, in proportion to the strength of the feeling, so will be the determination to win the

individual, whether she is inclined in the same direction or not.

A person, in marrying, has no right to expect a fortune, if there is none brought to meet it; but it does not thence follow that he ought to marry one who has nothing at all. Love, and a proper gratification of this feeling, with such an elevation of society as we have been accustomed to, will contribute not a little to our happiness; but love and poverty, with a continual sinking, will greatly sadden the heart and the countenance. Some, in entering into matrimony, think of love and love only; others think chiefly of a family alliance; others still, only of money. Love, of course, should be the principal thing; though a due regard to worldly comfort and to rank need not be wholly overlooked.

I have already spoken of marriage, as being, like the rest of the world, a gaming table; but on this particular topic I must say a few words more. The trafficking which sometimes exists among persons desirous of entering into the matrimonial relation, is as laughable to the cynic as it is disgusting to the person of good sense. All kinds of deception are sometimes practised with regard to rank, prospects, accomplishments, dispositions, attachments, and every thing that can affect the mind of a deluded lover. But when the veil of hypocrisy is thrown aside, when the wife and husband have left the altar for their permanent dwelling, all factitious attractions vanish, as the splen-

dors of a summer's evening are lost among the shadows of night. Amiable dispositions are now exchanged for pettishness, suspicion, and sulkiness; ardent attachment, for coolness or hatred; soft words, for hard ones; and thus, perchance, the hapless pair go on, till one of them dies, and then the survivor, like an icicle in the sun's rays, is dissolved in tears.

Some individuals, being inclined to make the conubial engagement a complete business speculation, keep two or three persons continually under their influence, as it were, that, if one should "slip," another might be chosen. But this, whenever it happens, too much resembles the contention of dogs for a bone,—if one leaves, the others do the same. For, since the contest arises, not from love to the object, but from rivalry, there is, among those who wish to obtain the prize, a feeling of envy and jealousy, which, having passed away, nothing remains.

If the great object, in marriage, is an increase of human happiness, in accordance with the first and later commands of Jehovah,—as it certainly *should* be,—a person, in looking forward to so holy a connection, should practice no kind of artifice. A discovery will be much more injurious than any deception will be advantageous. Let him, therefore, act fairly and honorably; and then, the recollection of upright and praiseworthy conduct before marriage, will be likely to secure and preserve esteem afterward.

Perhaps I ought here to remark that, when a person is under the influence of powerful love, all other objects are apt to be forgotten,—just as a dazzling meteor before the eyes is apt to distract and bewilder. Eloise says thus to Abelard :

“ I waste the matin lamp in sighs for thee,
Thy image steals between my God and me ;
Thy voice in every hymn I seem to hear
With every bead I drop too soft a tear.
When from the censer clouds of fragrance roll,
And swelling organs lift the rising soul,
One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight ;
Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight ;
In seas of flame my plunging soul is drowned,
While altars blaze, and angels tremble round.”

For this and other extremes of the love-passion the ancients had their various cures ; at least, such they regarded them. Some, however, were for the purpose of increasing the passion in the less interested party ; but they all had their supposed efficacy. Among their love potions were preparations from the flesh of the lizard ; the brain of the calf ; the bones of the left side of a toad ; the blood of doves, snakes, and owls ; the hairs on the tip of a wolf's tail ; the human liver ; rags ; vermin, etc. The burning of laurel, the **wearing** of the hyena's udder under the left arm, and the melting of wax were supposed to be influential in softening the heart of an otherwise inflexible female !

Nor are these fooleries quite done away—strange as it may seem—at the present time. I could name not a few supposed love potions of the nineteenth century. But I purposely refrain. They do no honor to human nature; and the sooner they are forgotten, the better.

In closing this love chapter I must advert, briefly, to a superstition which has obtained in many parts of the world, and to some extent in our own country. Dr. Watts alludes to it, in his lyric poems, when he makes an Indian philosopher reason—or rather declaim—as follows:

“The mighty Power that formed the mind,
One mould for every two designed,
And blessed the rising pair.
This be a match for this, he said;
Then down he sent the souls he made,
To seek them bodies here.”

But need I stop, here, to combat such a superstition? We have no evidence of any appointment by nature, or nature's Author, of particular persons for the society of each other; of any such character, at least, as to preclude the necessity of using our own good sense in the matter; though it is not surprising that in so great a variety of occurrences, we should meet with a few singular, not to say astonishing, coincidences. Humanity appears to be left, in this respect, as it is in many others, to its own decision. If we act freely and judge wisely, we enjoy the comfort of it, and are

likely to draw down upon ourselves, in the greatest degree which is compatible with our own free agency, the Divine blessing; but if otherwise, we are, in a corresponding degree, the recipients of serious loss.

Could it be so ordered as to have this union of the sexes for life wholly regulated by the Supreme Being, we should doubtless have fewer unhappy matches than we now do; for in that case each individual would be adapted to his fellow,—at least, at the beginning. But another state of things is our lot; and it behooves us to conform to it, and be thankful. Marriage, even now, is so much better for us and for the world than celibacy, that, whether we are guided by mere feeling, or suffer ourselves to be influenced by the kind, early efforts and persuasions of parents and other friends, — such efforts and persuasions as I have recommended in the preceding chapters of this work,—it will at least hold the world together till the purposes of the Almighty concerning its latter-day glory shall be fully accomplished. Let us, then, quietly “bide our time.” Let us do as well, in the “premises,” as we can, and patiently—and may I not say devoutly?—wait the issue.

CHAPTER V.

AT WHAT AGE SHOULD WE MARRY?

THE age at which marriage should take place, when considered in a practical light, greatly varies. It may be fifteen, it may be fifty. But, abstractly considered, that is, with a careful regard to the constitution of the race, as a race, and the constitution and particular laws of the human frame, the question is a very different one. In this point of view,—the physiological one,—first marriages should not take place, in the case of males, sooner than about the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year; nor in that of females sooner than the twenty-first or twenty-second year. These are the earliest periods at which the physical frames of the sexes, respectively, can be said to be perfectly mature; and therefore they are the earliest periods at which matrimony, physically considered, is admissable. I say about twenty-five or six in the male, for example, because there is some little variation in different individuals of different families, and perhaps even in the same family. In many young men the physical frame throughout—the bones not excepted—is as well consolidated at twenty-five as ever

it is afterward ; while, in here and there an individual, this consolidation, which indicates physical maturity, does not take place till twenty-six or seven years of age. Observe, however, that what I say has regard to our own country and race, and not to Labrador on the one hand, or Hindostan on the other, or to the natives of Africa, or the savages of America.

But then, as I have intimated at the beginning, there are in civic life so many existing circumstances in operation which stand in the way of a rigid adherence to the general rules established in our constitutions, as to leave much to the judgment of the parties respectively, and that of their friends. Still, many valuable instructions may be given on this subject, of a general character, which may be of service to the young who are desirous of knowing what is truth ; some of which will be attempted in this chapter.

The laws of particular countries, as well as of certain religions, almost compel us to marry at certain ages, which may be early or late, but which have little reference to maturity of body or mind. Aristotle taught that the proper age for marriage, in the case of the male, was thirty-seven ; in that of the female, eighteen. Plato recommended the age of thirty for males, and twenty for females. The Jews, by their customs and traditions, if not by their laws, require marriage at a very premature age. Thus, whenever the constitution of the parties is far enough advanced to permit it, — that is to say, whenever puberty has

begun to make its appearance,—marriage is permitted to all their young men who are but one day over thirteen years of age; and to all their young women who are but one day over twelve. And, except in the case of impotence on the part of the male, or other equally imperative constitutional difficulties, it is deemed not only a disgrace, but a sin, if they are not married before the close of their eighteenth year. The Hindoos, also, and most of the Eastern nations, both ancient and modern, marry their children while very young. So among many savage tribes of the north of Europe, and elsewhere. Indeed, among the great majority of our race, in its numerous tribes and nations, it has been customary to marry, or at least to betroth, the young while they are little more than children. But among the ancient Gauls it was, on the contrary, reckoned a disgrace to be married early; and so also among the ancient Germans. The latter, it is said, prohibited marriage before the completion of the twentieth year.

These national customs and requirements of course often stand opposed to nature's intentions; but are, nevertheless, for the time, and in the existing circumstances, compulsory. The law of the land, except it be in the case of a mere despotism, is no law until its wants have been indicated by custom. And custom, founded on the public sentiment, whether written down in statute form or not, is a tribunal from which very few dare to appeal.

It is a remarkable fact, — and the statement may to some appear paradoxical, — that in many cases, both national and individual, ignorance would seem to be almost as imperative as the laws of God or of the land. The paradox is rendered intelligible, when it is considered that the constitutional or physical laws of the human being are not known to multitudes of our race, and never have been; and hence are of no force. These, therefore, having not the law, are, as Paul says, a law to themselves. They certainly are not expected to follow laws of which their consciences take no sort of cognizance. And there are not a few individuals who hold themselves under everlasting obligations to obey all God's laws, physical, moral, social, and intellectual, who would be much more likely, in their present ignorance, to obey many of our conventional laws, — the law of early marriage among the rest, — than to yield to such an interpretation as physiology and hygiene, viewed in the light and spirit of the Bible, compel us, at the present day, to adopt. For, though the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour includes in its ultimate intentions the perfection and sanctification of the body, — demanding that its members should become servants to righteousness, that it should be kept under law, that it should be included in a living sacrifice we are daily to make, and that it should be a part of the Christian temple, or temple of the Holy Ghost, — how seldom has it been thus proclaimed or presented! How seldom has

the body been practically regarded as under the domain of conscience!

There are thousands among us, who, in consequence of reasoning but feebly and superficially on this subject, come to the conclusion,—hasty and erroneous as it is,—that, where there are no pecuniary or other disabilities in the way, the sooner marriage is consummated after the arrival of puberty, the better. And I admit, I have already admitted, that, practically,—taking society, I mean, as it is,—there is more of weight in this conclusion than many at first thought might suppose.

What I mean to affirm, in the case, is just this. When the change of constitution, which we are wont to call puberty, involves in either sex—as too often it does—the habit of yielding to the propensities in an irregular manner, and for the sake of mere temporary gratification, thus debasing, deteriorating, and debilitating a system of machinery which God created and caused to be developed and perfected for nobler purposes, as their ultimatum; and when there is no choice left us between persistence in such indulgences and early matrimony, the latter is to be preferred. It is certainly less injurious to the parties themselves—saying nothing now of its effects on others—than a grosser violence to nature would be.

But this concession is not intended to tolerate early marriage, after all, except as a choice of evils. And it has given me great pain, as I doubt not it has

many others, to find such marriages spoken of, within a few years, by some even who ought to have taught better things, as being not only tolerable, but advisable; and this, in a few instances, without drawback or qualification. How much better to inculcate and enforce, as fast as possible, the laws of the human constitution, than even to seem to pander to their general violation!

There may be a few other things and circumstances, besides gross ignorance and its consequent irregularities, which would justify premature marriage; but it is believed they are neither numerous, nor very imperative. Virtue is of itself usually promoted by long delay; at least, when any tolerable share of light has been reflected on its path. The *most* imperative of the circumstances here referred to, are those of certain newly-settled countries or provinces, whose happiness is supposed to depend largely on a rapid increase of the population. Dr. Franklin once contended, with great ingenuity, zeal, and earnestness, — and with not a little eloquence, — for the force of this consideration, especially in the circumstances then existing in these States. For myself, however, I doubt whether the real longevity of any country was ever promoted by encouraging marriage at an earlier age than that to which the laws of God, natural and moral, clearly point.

It has been said, by a highly distinguished British writer, that, for every year of married life before the

age of twenty-one or two, woman runs the risk of shortening her general probation about three years. At this rate, if she enters into married life at fifteen or sixteen instead of twenty-one or twenty-two, she jeopardises her longevity eighteen years! I do not know by what facts, as data, a truth so extraordinary and so mathematically stated, is supposed by this foreign writer to be sustained; though I have no doubt that human life is in this way considerably shortened. Prematurity of fruit-bearing, whether in the animal world or the vegetable, cannot otherwise than impair the vital energies of the individual; and what is true in this matter generally, is most certainly so in its particulars, especially in their application to the very highest and noblest species of the animal races.

But, if female life is hazarded, — as I have said, jeopardised, — and indeed absolutely shortened, by premature marriage and its consequences, must it not be so, at least in some degree, with the other sex? And if both sexes are subjected to this general drawback upon human vigor and happiness, and that, too, from generation to generation, have we not reason to apprehend the most serious results to the race?

On the other hand, marriage, when deferred to a later period than that to which the ripening constitution of the human being appears to point, must be followed by consequences not unlike those which have just been alluded to. Extremes often approach very closely to each other, even if they do not quite

meet. The first-born of a family may not be found greatly, if it all, affected by debility or disease, as the result of a departure from nature's laws, in either direction; while the later-born may be; and there is no guaranty for the safety of the first-born. Indeed, so far as I have observed, the penalty is quite apt, to fall heaviest on the latter. But the deteriorating consequences, of which I have spoken, are also apt to be very severe on those children who are born when parents, instead of being at a suitable age to become parents, should be settling their affairs in life and preparing for their own dissolution.

In very old countries, and in their large towns and cities, it usually happens, as the result of causes which do not exist in equally large degree elsewhere, that both celibacy and late marriages are becoming exceedingly common; and their effects on the public welfare are as deplorable as they are common. No state or nation can reasonably hope to escape premature decline, — were all other causes of decline absent, — when the designs of God, with regard to the family institution, are habitually, and through successive generations, violated. Marriage and the family institution duly regarded and honored are the hinge on which is made to turn, in a greater degree than most people are aware, the happiness of society and of the world.

The London Lancet, for June, 1838, has a series of calculations on this subject, which are exceedingly in-

teresting and important. These calculations are based upon three exact documents, made in different countries and at different periods, which prove, in the most convincing manner, that notwithstanding the anxieties and cares which in both sexes are connected with the married state, and notwithstanding the mysterious curse which was originally pronounced against the fair and frailer part of creation hangs heavily upon it, yet, on the whole, marriage, at a suitable or physiological age, contributes very remarkably to lengthen human life.

The first document is that of Odier, whose observations on the mean duration of life in females were made during a period of about fifty years, ending in 1813. From his tables, it appears that the difference of life between married and unmarried females is, on an average (allowing marriages to take place at five different periods, between the ages of twenty and forty), five years. Or, to place the fact in a stronger light, a young woman at twenty, by marrying, adds nine years and a half to the probable duration of her life, while a woman at forty adds two and one-sixth years.

Departieux's tables form the second document, and relate to both sexes, comprising a total of 48,540 deaths which took place between 1715 and 1744. From these, it would appear that the number of married men who die after the age of twenty is nearly one half less than the number of bachelors who die

at the same period; and, for forty-three married men or widowers who attain the age of ninety, we find only six unmarried men reaching the same age. The number of single women who die after the age of twenty is about four times greater than that of married females or widows dying after the same period; and only fourteen unmarried women reach the age of ninety, for every one hundred and twelve married women or widows who attain the same age.

These tables not only show a remarkable difference in the mortality of the two classes between twenty and thirty, at a period of life when other causes, doubtless, have much influence in producing the effect among the married (such as their better worldly condition at that age, etc.), but also at later periods of life; for they show that, taking one hundred married and unmarried persons, the number of these who survive the age of forty-four is greater by 36.8 per cent in the former class than in the latter.

The third document alluded to is a set of tables prepared by Biches, of Amsterdam, comprising a period of twelve years, ending in 1826, and coinciding, in a most remarkable degree, with the other two. The only difference worthy of note consists in the very important fact, that the mortality of married women, during the usual period of maturity, is less now than it was a century ago.

Facts thus established, upon the authority of carefully taken records in France, Switzerland, and Hol-

land, confirm the oft-repeated truth that the fulfilment of a pleasing duty, not only human but divine, on the part of both sexes, is calculated to add many years to the probable duration of human existence.

I have observed, in certain conditions and circumstances of society, a foolish fondness on the part of parents, and even on that of young women themselves, for the marriage of the latter with those who are greatly their seniors, especially if they chance to wear feathers or epaulettes. This might perhaps be pardonable, did it appear to have its origin solely, or even very largely, in that sense of dependence on the other sex which is so often found to be an essential ingredient of female character, and which, without any morbid increase from mis-education, or from any other motives or circumstances which are reprehensible, so frequently prompts young women to marry. But, whenever and wherever it had its origin, in other and less worthy motives, such as a love of that property, rank, or influence, which a more advanced age may have secured to the individual who is the object of affection or favor, it is undignified and indecorous, not to say highly reprehensible; and should be perseveringly discouraged.

It happens, however, that this strange preference for inequality of age is much stronger, as well as much more frequent, in men than in women, after all. Our own sex are exceedingly fond—at least to a very great and greatly increasing extent—of being wedded

to very young women ; and, as far as I have observed, this fondness has its principal origin in motives which neither admit of palliation nor apology. But I may, perhaps, have occasion to advert to the moral tendency of this custom in another place. A word to the wise, here or there, should be sufficient.

CHAPTER VI.

ON EQUALITY IN MATRIMONY.

“SOMETIMES a matrimonial connection is formed from the most heterogeneous materials imaginable; such, for example, as an old man with a mere girl; an aged woman with a boy; a gigantic person with a dwarf; a corpulent person with the mere apology for a human being,—an animated walking-stick; or the blind or the lame with the sound and the healthy.”

All these will show the great variety of causes which occasion what is called love. Sometimes it is caused by bodily qualities; at others, especially in the absence of physical beauty, by mental accomplishments. Sometimes, again, it is the result of a defect rather than an excellence; such defect having accidentally been connected with pleasing feelings. And, on some occasions, also, when there is scarcely any attraction in another, a person is pleased with his companion because he is pleased with himself.

We have seen deformed persons—the writer has witnessed several instances of the kind—who seemed, from their very deformity, to become so much the more attractive. Perhaps the love which was felt, in

these cases, was preceded by that sympathy which all, who are not absolutely brutal, have with the unfortunate. This is the more probable, from the fact that it is woman who is oftenest attracted in this way; and female sympathy with misfortune and suffering is known to be peculiarly active and excitable. Thus, Thomas Roberts, of Lincolnshire, in England, was born with his arms terminating at his elbows, and his legs at his knees; and yet he was married three times!

It is by no means unusual to behold an ugly, forbidding, and vicious husband accompanied by a beautiful, fascinating, and virtuous wife. In such a case, one would think there must have been but a very slight degree of real love on the part of the female, unless the marriage were compulsory; and, if the husband be kind to his wife, there may be, and probably is, a good deal of sympathy and affection.

But I greatly dislike all inequalities in marriage, so far, as in the nature of things, they can possibly be avoided. Morally, intellectually, and physically, it is, as a general rule, exceedingly desirable that there should be a similarity of character. The exceptions to this rule, such as those which relate to temperament and a few other physiological points, will be pointed out in their proper place.

To equality in point of wealth I have already alluded, in the chapter on love. Some men, of a particular turn of mind, have supposed it would be likely

to secure connubial happiness to ally themselves with absolute poverty. Gratitude, they have said to themselves, will thus be excited, and will not fail to secure both loyalty and obedience. But facts are stubborn things, and do not bear us out in such expectations as these. On the contrary, I believe that, of one hundred of these marriages, a smaller proportion will turn out well, than of almost any other selection of one hundred which could possibly be made.

The truth is, that few things are worse to bear than sudden affluence. Take the best woman in the world,—and I might say the best man also,—and raise her suddenly from abject poverty to wealth, or even to that participation in the advantages and circumstances which wealth brings to a household, and which, under the most despotic family arrangements, cannot but be shared in a large degree by both parties, and it will result, in a vast majority of instances, in a change of character decidedly for the worse. Indeed, so far as woman is concerned, whom I have oftenest seen placed in these circumstances, I do not believe one in twenty-five can pass the ordeal in safety. They who have doubts in this matter, will do well to observe for themselves. I do not ask them to observe for *me*, or in the desire or expectation of coming to conclusions similar to my own. I have no desire to mislead; nor any motive to such a desire. I seek not to inculcate myself, but the truth; and to lead others to similar desires.

For this, then, as well as for various reasons to which I have not adverted, I greatly prefer that the parties to matrimony should be on nearly equal terms, so far as property is concerned. A slight difference, of course, is not objectionable ; but against that large inequality of which I have been speaking, I must and do enter my most solemn protest.

Equality of talent, capacity, or cultivation, is almost as indispensable as equality of fortune. Here, too, the saddest mistakes have sometimes been made. A literary man has married an ignoramus, — perhaps with the belief that he should thus enjoy the felicity of instructing one whom he tenderly loved, in all the lengths and breadths and heights of those mysteries of knowledge which have given him so much pleasure. Perhaps, however, he has, in a majority of cases, been mistaken. Perhaps he has misunderstood himself. If he has been chiefly moved by that pride which too many learned men feel, in looking down as from a height, and felicitating themselves on their comparative elevation, it is but just that he should suffer the natural or heaven-appointed penalty of disappointment. For disappointment, for some reason or other, is the almost universal lot of all who marry thus unequally. A disappointment still greater is the lot of those who marry fools, with their eyes open to their folly. I have known such instances. I have known young men grasp at a fortune, by taking with it one whom few would regard as any thing but demented, except

for their property. And I must say that, when I have witnessed the trials to which they have thus subjected themselves, I have scarcely been able to pity them. Yet pitiable they certainly are. He who puts his own eyes out is as truly an object of pity as the more sane man who loses his eyes by accident.

Much has been said, of late years, about woman's rights; and much has been well said. It is high time for woman herself to come up to the work of placing herself in the position which God in his Providence has assigned her. It is not for man alone — I mean in a true state of things — to say what is and what is not proper for woman; it is for men and women both. Let woman hold her meetings on woman's rights till she brings herself to the point of being willing to sit side by side with him whom she has so long unwittingly conceded to be her superior, and who has been as willing to receive the homage as woman has been obsequiously to yield it; and we need not fear for the result. I have no doubt that women who are truly intelligent, and who love God and humanity, will settle down, after the most mature deliberation, on an equality of the sexes as to their rights, but on a very great inequality as to their duties, and their modes of operation and influence. Woman will not readily leave her heaven-appointed sphere, and rush to the embattled field, when she understands herself as God and all sensible and well-informed men would

have her; at least, if she can persuade her companion to act as her agent.

One very strange species of inequality — for I know not what else to call it — should be noticed in passing. The ancient Persians were accustomed, sometimes, to marry their own mothers; and the Tartars to marry their daughters; but these practices, to a modern taste, are disgusting.

The connection of youth with age, in the married relation, seems to me one of the most objectionable of all inequalities; not so much on the ground so often taken, viz., that one party is likely to greatly outlive the other, as on the more valid and defensible ground of a difference of taste, which is inseparable from age, and which forever prevents a full and complete and perfect sympathy. It is vain for husbands and wives to reason on this subject, and to seek for a compromise of tastes and inclinations. Let us be as near together in age as possible, and there will still remain room enough for disagreement afterward.

In closing this chapter, I must be allowed to fortify my views by a somewhat lengthy extract or two from the British volume to which I am, in this chapter, already very much indebted. It may be considered as a kind of summing up of the whole matter:

“Not only is a great dissimilarity of rank and condition a cause of dislike, but a great variation in age is frequently the cause of distrust and unhappiness.

The proportion which Aristotle suggests (thirty-seven in the male, and eighteen, or about one-half as much, in the female) may be appropriate in one respect, but it is objectionable in others. The life of the female is just as long as that of the male; and the union of middle age and youth, where the one is twice as old as the other, will not often allow of a uniformity of feelings and disposition. The case of Seneca* and that of Sir Matthew Hale are exceptions. Youth is generally gay, thoughtless, and frivolous; but life, in more advanced periods, is sober, thoughtful, and dignified. A husband should not be deemed a teacher or guardian for a wife, so much as a companion; and the wife should not be considered a guardian for the husband. There ought to be a mutual sympathy, and, in most respects, an equality of influence."

Once more, in relation to obstinacy,—a crime which in matrimony, when the ages are unequal, is very apt to be charged on the senior party.

"Obstinacy must not be indulged by either party; for, as the bond of union cannot be easily broken, if one be perverse, the other must bend. If two trees be bound tightly together, and both be stiff, the cords

* Paulina, the wife of Seneca, in his old age, was young, beautiful and accomplished; and she was so much attached to her husband, that, when the veins of Seneca were opened by the command of Nero, she caused her own to be cut, that she might bleed to death also.

will probably break ; if not immediately, they will when the cords become weaker. And thus, what God has joined together the perversity of human beings will put asunder. Obstinacy in trifling matters, in the married state, is an evidence of little love and a bad heart. But if trifling matters appear important, and the gaining of every point be as the taking of a citadel, the person is wrong in his judgment, — he is insane, or partially so.”

I wish the subject of equality and inequality in the married state were far better studied beforehand by all who enter into its semi-sacred bonds, than it is. It would be worth, in the result, twice its cost. The family, in its connection with and in its bearing on human happiness, can hardly be too much exalted in our estimation. Fools may laugh about it ; but, alas ! they little know how much they owe to it.

CHAPTER VII.

ARE SECOND MARRIAGES ADMISSIBLE?

THERE have been worthy individuals in every age, who have doubted whether second marriages, under any circumstances, are admissible. Some have even protested against them as alike contrary to reason and Scripture, and not a few — we shall see hereafter with how much propriety — have claimed the authority of Paul, the Apostle, in their favor.

Their reasoning appears not unlike the following: “Marriage, it cannot be denied, — the union for life of one man and one woman, — is both according to reason and nature and the law of God. The striking equality of numbers, of the two sexes, everywhere, loudly proclaims this doctrine, and always has done. But reason — pure reason — goes no farther. It does not say whether the chasm or gap which is made in the family relation, by death, may or may not be filled; and revelation, though by no means positive in its general inculcations of this sort, can hardly be said to encourage it.”

Now, I have all along maintained that both reason

and revelation point to matrimony chiefly as a means of education, — of forming the character, not only of the parties themselves, but also of a rising family. When death breaks in upon the Divine arrangement, and leaves but one teacher to the family school, it is by no means an unnatural thought that the vacancy should be filled. Where there is a family of children, this seems to be almost necessary, if not quite indispensable. Where there are no children, and the parties are far advanced in life, and suppose themselves already sufficiently wise, so that the family school can no longer instruct them, the case is altered. Marriage, in such circumstances, may not be quite indispensable. And yet, had such persons as the last-mentioned made progress enough in knowledge and excellence to enable them to perceive the need of both, they would just then begin to feel the value of matrimonial life, and to have a stronger desire for a second union of this kind than they had for a first. The exception I have made above, to the general rule, belongs only to inexcusable ignorance.

The number of husbands who are left alone by the death of their wives is scarcely less than that of wives who are left as widows, unless it be in the time of war, or other very peculiar circumstances. So that all the arguments in favor of *first* marriages, as derived from equality of numbers in the two sexes, become about equally valid, when the matter is fairly looked through in their bearing on *second* marriages.

It has been stated, I know, that in some of the oriental countries, especially in the island of Java, there are twice as many girls born as boys. But this statement needs confirmation. Besides, the existence of such instances, in opposition to the general rule already mentioned, only serves to confirm it.

In apparent opposition to the views I have here advanced, it has sometimes been urged that a succession of wives will induce a merely mechanical and temporary regard, which is in the end unfavorable; just as a succession of places — the result of frequent removal — prevents any genuine love of home. They who press us with this reasoning admit, indeed, two wives or two husbands in succession; but, when it extends to three or four, they say it is objectionable. But the principle is the same in the one case as in the other, only, a third marriage is much less frequently needful than a second, and a fourth than a third, except for the sake of personal companionship.

Ridicule, with its keen edge, has sometimes been brought to bear against all marriages but the *first*. Thus, we find it publicly stated, somewhere, that when the Duke of Rutland was once Viceroy of Ireland, Sir John Hamilton attended one of his levees. "This is timely rain," said the Duke; "it will bring every thing above ground." — "I hope not, my lord," said Sir John, "for I have three wives there." And it is added, in the same connection: "It would be a ludicrous occurrence, if, upon any particular occasion, a

man's three or four wives should 'burst their ceremonies,' and visit their former dwelling. What astonishment! What uplifted hands and distended eyeballs! What speechlessness and violent speeches, 'reproaches and animosities!'"

The weight of argument against second and all subsequent marriages appears to lie in this single consideration. The Creator has appointed, as a permanent means of accomplishing his purposes in and for this world, the individual, the family, and the church,—the family to consist, essentially, of one husband, one wife, and their children. Now, any and all other marriages above or beyond this, as well as any thing short of it, tend, in a greater or less degree, to break in upon the Divine beauty of this excellent arrangement.

But, in defending second marriages, as I have done at the beginning of this chapter, and, as I still think, justly, it was by no means my intention to encourage the practice extensively; but only on occasions, as a matter of duty. It does not follow, that because an already existing family of children — or perhaps of two — is in need of guidance and direction, there should be another added under the same roof. To be sure, I do not mean to take upon myself the responsibility of saying that such second-rate families should not be tolerated; but I am strongly inclined to discourage it as much as possible.

What Paul has said, in his first epistle to the Cor-

inthians and elsewhere, about marriage, though applicable for the most part, as it is believed, by Dr. Adam Clarke and other able Scripture commentators, to *first* marriages, certainly has a bearing on the question of marrying the *second* time. But, then, it is also believed by many, — perhaps by most who have thought largely on the subject, — that what is here said by the great apostle, even against second marriages, is only intended to apply to times of general persecution and distress, like that to which the Corinthians were at that time subjected. Such a view has at least this consideration in its favor; that it renders the Scripture representations harmonious, and does not, in any way or degree, go to annul or weaken the force of the great first Divine decree, that it is not good for man to be alone.

These remarks are made and founded on the supposition, as I have said already, that the motives which prompt to a second union are such as they should be. Of course, whenever the motives which prompt to action in the case are low, unworthy, selfish, and sordid, it cannot be encouraged. The same apostle, who, in time of peculiar danger from fiery persecution, as well as of liability to the breaking up of all family ties and relationships, assured the Corinthians that it was good and proper for the unmarried and widows to remain single, as they were, admits and insists, as a general rule, that "marriage is honorable in all;" and that, too, without specifying so

much as a single exception. Now, marriage, for aught I can see, in particular and needful cases, such as I have specified in this chapter, — if not abused or perverted or desecrated, is just as “honorable” to those who have been once married as to others.

The Divine intention, that we should be helps-meet to each other, is, after all, the great leading idea to be kept in view, whenever the question of matrimony is agitated, whether our inquiries refer to first marriages or subsequent ones. If, by a renewal of the sacred bond, the parties can be made more efficient helps to each other, and to the world, than otherwise would be possible, I see no insurmountable reason why they should not be united; nor would I care to inquire whether by a second marriage or a third. But, then, where the motives that prompt to action are exclusively, or even largely, unworthy and selfish, I would to the utmost discourage it.

It is ever to be remembered, by those who would act up to the dignity of their nature and the Divine intention, that, had no violence entered the world, to be the prolific source of destruction to our own sex, or of monopoly or worse abuses to the other, the great fact, that there is always in society about an equal number of males and females, would forever stare us in the face; and to every considerate person would be worth a thousand specious, or even learned, arguments on the subject we are considering. That petty despotism — in Europe, Asia, Africa, or Utah

— which connives at the appropriation of more than one helper of the female sex at once, is as truly and really violence to the Divine order, as those cruel wars which destroy hundreds if not thousands in a day, of beings whom God has designed to be helpers, through a long life of labor, in the advancement of his kingdom and the world's latter-day glory.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PERPETUITY OF MARRIAGE.

THE definition which has been given to the word marriage, in the preceding pages, viz., that it is the union of two persons of opposite sexes for life, is sufficient, perhaps, to indicate the writer's general views on this subject. And yet, there is such a laxity in the public mind, at the present time, with regard both to the perpetuity and the solemnity of the marriage institution, as requires a little patient consideration, if not even a gentle rebuke.

Not more than twenty years ago, a correspondent of mine, who was residing for a time in Germany, wrote a letter in which he inquired, with some apparent anxiety, whether it was indeed true, that the legislature of the State of Connecticut had, during the preceding year, granted no less than a hundred divorces. Connecticut had been hitherto deemed the land of steady habits; and such a departure, as he said, from the good old path of their ancestors, was, to him, most strangely unaccountable.

My reply was, that, though the facts in the case, apart from all coloring and misrepresentation, were

sufficiently alarming and ominous of ill ; yet the departure was not so great as the public report would seem to indicate. It was indeed true, not only that the number of divorces in a year was very large, but, also, that it was at that time — as it still is — greatly on the increase.

In all my early life, up to years of manhood, I do not recollect to have met with but one individual who had been separated from his wife by a bill of divorce ; and that individual appeared to me more like a monster than a man. Yet there was nothing in his external demeanor that could have occasioned this ; for, in his relations to all the rest of the world, his former wife alone excepted, he was, so far as I know, entirely above reproach.

We are, professedly, a Christian people, — we are not Jews, or Mohammedans, or Pagans. We are more, even, than this. We of New England are Protestant Christians, — nay, sons of the Puritans, — and make our boast of it. Now, he who is as familiar with the New Testament as all Protestant Christians who can read ought to be, should know the views of our Saviour on this great subject. They are by no means obscure. They stand out, as plain as the Sermon on the Mount, or the foretold destruction of Jerusalem.

Take, for example, the nineteenth chapter of Matthew, at the third verse, and read onward. The Pharisees inquire concerning the lawfulness of this

very thing of which we are speaking. Our Saviour points them at once to the original Divine arrangement, and represents it as unalterable. "They say unto him, Why, then, did Moses command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so." And, if he does not positively forbid a separation in case of the most clear and avowed unfaithfulness, he at once removes all unworthy motives of any other sort, by forbidding the second marriage of the individual who obtains the divorce. And Paul, and the apostles, who wrote afterward on the same subject, appear to have adopted exactly the same views.

The more frequently and readily divorces are obtainable in any country, — above all, in a Christian country, — the less respectable and desirable does marriage become. And, on the contrary, the more matrimony is regarded as indissoluble, except by death, the higher must be our estimate of its advantages, and of its consequent happiness. Dr. Dwight, in his sermon on the seventh commandment, has the following striking, and, I have no doubt, very just, remarks: "Were a divorce impossible, the interests of every married pair would be one through life." The temptation even to that high-handed guilt which permits, not a divorce, but a separation, would be greatly diminished, if not wholly removed.

I must repeat the idea, in order that it may be deeply impressed on the reader's mind, that, the more we allow of divorce in society, the more frequent will it become, and the less will be the sanctity of the marriage institution. Divorce, in our Saviour's day, had become quite common among the Jews; and, as history assures us, was productive of much evil. "One of the Jewish doctors asserted," so we are told, "that, if a man beheld a woman who was handsomer than his wife, he might put away his wife and marry her." What a monstrous doctrine! For, in this way, all the wives of Judea, except the very handsomest, might have been divorced. And Josephus, himself, had drank so deeply of this doctrine, that he very coolly said, "About this time I put away my wife, who had borne me three children, not being pleased with her manners."

It is, moreover, a fact worthy of record, that, for forty years after the Romans introduced a law of divorce, no respectable person availed himself of it. This, at once, confirms the views I have been anxious to present on this subject, and does honor to human nature, even under the disabilities which have been incurred by the fall.

I am the more anxious to establish just sentiments on this point, because of the present downward tendency of the public sentiment among us, in this particular. Not only in city, but in country; not only in the old world, but the new; not only among the

semi-civilized, but among the refined,—we hear a great deal said about freedom from family restraints, liberty of choice, etc., etc. Why, I have before me, at this moment, an author who says, “The moment any two animals, however fond before, are fastened together by a chain they cannot break, they begin to quarrel without any apparent reason, and peck each other solely because they cannot get loose again.”

The praise, too, which is bestowed on celibacy, by many writers of considerable merit, has had no small share of influence in contributing to that general licentiousness which prevails in the public mind on this great subject. It is truly astonishing to notice, in this particular, the littlenesses of some of our great men. Thus, Lord Bacon says, “Wife and children are a great impediment to great enterprises.” And Jeremy Taylor observes: “Celibacy, like a fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in perpetual sweetness.” And the author of the *Treatise on Happiness* very gravely tells us that “In the connubial state, too frequently, the sympathies are concentrated within the family circle, while there is little generosity or philanthropy beyond;” and that “some of the worthiest men in regard to benevolence and good feeling have led a single life.” These last-mentioned facts may be admitted without invalidating our main principles; for, if marriage does not make us better in the world, it must be because it has already, through abuse, acquired a downward tendency.

Polygamy has usually been passed over by moral writers, on the ground that there was no practical necessity, in a country like the United States, of inveighing against such a vice as this. But, alas for fallen humanity! the last quarter of a century has shown us that human nature is human nature still; and that this excrescence of humanity is once more reviving in certain regions and circumstances. Can it ever become general, and universally popular? The great Jehovah knows.



PART II.

Proper Qualifications for Marriage.

CHAPTER I.

UNITY OF PURPOSE.

THE instructions on the subject of matrimony, all the way from the Bible pages down to those of the most evanescent and catchpenny pamphlets of the day, more than imply that the husband and wife should be alike in general character. The doctrines of revelation and of reason, of theory and of experience, of sobriety and of levity, have been alike emphatic on this main point, "Be not unequally yoked."

Some few there are who have carried their notions, in this matter, so far as to believe—from hasty observation, no doubt—that nature generally takes care to secure this point. They even tell us that there is, for the most part, in married life, not only a similarity of character, but even of feature. Others,

however, have rushed to the opposite extreme, and not only insisted that the parties to married life are, as a general rule, unlike each other, but that it should be so. By bringing into union two persons of very different character, we thus form, say they, a more perfect and harmonious whole. The phrenologists, if not the physiologists, have been charged with entertaining this latter opinion.

Now it appears, on a close examination of this subject, that there is not a little of truth in both these opinions. Nay, more: it is most certain that, within certain assignable limits, they are both wholly true. In physical character—in temperament and hereditary tendencies—a difference in many particulars, as we shall see hereafter, is not only desirable, but indispensable. A difference, greater or less, in some few moral and intellectual characteristics, may also be admissible; perhaps even desirable. But, in general, and especially in a moral point of view, the resemblance can hardly be too perfect; and hence the force, perhaps,—at least in part,—of the general Scriptural injunction, already more than alluded to, not to be yoked with unbelievers.

These remarks are especially applicable to the subject of this chapter,—*the great leading purpose of life*. Here, if nowhere else, the parties should be equally yoked, as the apostle terms it; and our mistakes here become irretrievably fatal. And yet, no mistakes which can be named are in fashionable life—if indeed in any civic condition—more frequent.

How common it is, for example, to find the husband pursuing wealth as his chief end and aim,—the great purpose of his life,—while the wife cares little, if any thing at all, about it, except as far as she regards it as an instrument or means of display or pleasure. In a few instances—but, Heaven be praised, in a few only—the reverse may be true.

Then, again, in our modern, though pseudo-republican, governments it is no very uncommon thing to find the husband all engrossed with the fond desire of political distinction; while the wife's ambition, if ambition it can be called, is a social or moral one. She wishes, above all things else, to train well—for God and for humanity—a family of children. She has risen above the common level of her sex to the remembrance that our children are not our own, but are bought with a price which no Rothschild can command, if indeed compute. She has drunk deep of that unworldly spirit which seeks to train up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, rather than suffer to *grow up*, merely. But how can she do this, if her yoke-fellow takes no interest at all in the matter, but is wholly given “to low ambition and the pride of kings”? For, in our modern governments, which so carefully abjure the *name* of king, all who are deemed men of spirit aim to be kings, in the essentials.

But the kinds or modes of disagreement in which a want of union of purpose, in married life, is mani-

feasted, are numerous, and I might almost say endless. And, when we cast our eyes along the social ranks, and view things as they truly are, the disagreements of which I am speaking are clearly seen to be productive of just such results as every wise parent would deprecate, and as most would be glad to prevent if they *knew how* to do so, and were not already committed to some favorite scheme or enslaved by some master passion. No man or woman would be willing — so it appears to me — to sacrifice every reasonable prospect of happiness for the whole future of half a century of existence here below, saying nothing just now of the world above, to an over-fondness for a pretty face, or an honorable alliance, or a heavy purse. It would not be so, I mean, while the subject was fairly and clearly before the mind's eye, in all its magnitude and deformity. There is, therefore, philosophy, no less than piety, in the sage counsels of the man of Tarsus, — so often quoted already, — Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

The great absorbing aims of the believer and unbeliever are as diametrically opposed to each other, at least practically, as can well be imagined. 'But when I say this, I speak of the believer who is truly unselfish, and who really lives for others. For, though such opposition of character, in the great aims and ends of human life, should not lead to any open and fierce conduct, or even to angry words, yet life could hardly be otherwise, in such cases, than a useless

attempt to mingle water and oil. Or, worse still, perhaps, as Watts has well said in his *Two Happy Matches* :

“Samson’s young foxes might as well
In bands of cheerful wedlock dwell,
With fire-brands tied between.”

I would certainly be among the last to encourage the young of either sex, whether within the pale of matrimonial life or quite beyond its precincts, in the pursuit of low or unworthy objects ; above all, as the great end or purpose of life. And yet, of such vast importance do I consider unity of purpose to usefulness and happiness in the married state, that I should almost be willing to recommend to a young man the pursuit of inglorious ends, rather than any half-hearted attempt to follow, as “his being’s end and aim,” that in which his companion takes no sort of interest, or, above all, for which she has a determined and deadly hatred. For, if the leading object of the husband be, for example, the acquisition of wealth, it would seem to be an almost indispensable preliminary to connubial happiness that the wife, too, should worship the money-god. If the husband aim at the gubernatorial or presidential chair, or at any Alps, greater or smaller, of the world political, let her even sustain his hands, as did Aaron and Hur those of Moses in the wilderness ; and thus be his helpmeet in his ascent thither. It is certainly desirable that, whatever

be the object of supreme affection, the husband and wife should bow before the same God, and worship at the same temple.

And yet, my whole heart misgives, and my whole soul recoils, while I make these concessions. Fain would I be spared the painful task. Can there, indeed, be any real necessity for it? Must the family state — the great school of preparation for the greater school above, the little heaven below — be degraded to ends and aims so selfish, so ambitious, and so unhallowed?

Some have supposed that, though the parties to matrimony should set out with a difference as regards the great leading purpose of life, a union of purpose might, by slow degrees, be afterward attained. It is said that a good wife, with noble aims, sometimes effects the reformation of a worthless or inefficient husband. Still farther, even,—and with still more of confidence as we approach the extremes of this opinion,—it is said that a reformed rake makes the best husband. But the great practical fallacy in the latter case is, that the rake is seldom if ever reformed. It is right, however, that, in the discussion of this subject, I should make every concession the strictest truth will admit. I have occasionally seen good and industrious wives, by a holy and persevering example, prove the instruments of partial reformation to indolent or shiftless husbands.

Eugenia and Horatio once sustained this relation-

ship to each other. Horatio deserved little respect, except from those who could make a good bow, and dance well. Eugenia was the opposite of all this. And yet, in an ill-starred hour, she had imbibed the fashionable idea,—devoid as it is of any basis in human nature,—that a reformed rake makes the best husband, and had married him. And, I must also say, to her great credit, that she succeeded, in the end, in restoring him to the path of industry, and to a motive to action, better perhaps than none,—the desire of amassing property. But she was never able to bring him up to her own more elevated standard,—to the desire of making a rising family healthy, intelligent, virtuous, and religious. Of course, he did not desire their unhappiness, but he had no thoughts to spare to prevent it. “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,” was his maxim; and was quoted as frequently as it was impiously; and as little to its original intent and purpose as a thousand other maxims are, both sacred and profane. For any thing more truly elevated than mere money-making, he never seemed to care,—at least, beforehand; and Eugenia and he had the misfortune to pass together a life of fifty years and more, with nearly as little unity of purpose as Samson’s young foxes, already mentioned.

The truth is, that, if married life is commenced with sufficient union of purpose, there will still be room enough for divergency afterward. As a couple

of balls,—to use a homely comparison,—in setting out together to roll down an inclined plane, and proceeding, at first, in apparently the same direction, are apt to diverge from each other sooner or later; and as a very small departure at the beginning makes quite a considerable difference in the end, so the parties to marriage, though they set out without the slightest known disagreement of opinion or purpose, so far as the main intention or object of life is concerned, are, nevertheless, sufficiently liable to depart from each other in the progress of their journey. Let us not, then, deceive ourselves with expectations that are not well grounded in, and fortified by, good sense and experience.

Let us, in the study of human character, at home or abroad,—with reference I mean to our future matrimonial life,—make it our aim, above all else, to ascertain whether the object of our growing or contemplated attachment has, or has not, the same great leading purpose of life that we ourselves have. Of this we are to judge, of course, in various ways,—by the countenance, the words, and the actions,—in short, by the general tenor of the life. No one, who makes mere display her beings' end and aim will fail to manifest it, when engaged in free and unrestrained conversation. They who are devoted for life to the money-game cannot long hide themselves, even if they would. Nor will they, if they can, in the familiar circles of which I am now speaking. They

may, indeed, depart from their own train of thought from time to time, by way of politeness and accommodation; but, if left to themselves, will ere long return to their own favorite train of thought and remark. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Here, then, precisely at this point, is an important hint to parents. Would they have their offspring—their children, and their children's children—what they should be; would they have their hearts set on noble and heavenly purposes, in youth and in age, at home and abroad, in single and in matrimonial life, they must first have their own hearts in the same direction. And, in this object, there must be union. They must walk together—hand in hand—up to "Zion's Hill;" and their children it may be reasonably hoped will follow, even though it were instinctively. They must let their light shine, in all their conversation and conduct, in such a manner that it cannot be mistaken. Especially must they take care to have their involuntary influence such as it should be.

By involuntary influence, I here mean that influence which is exerted in those moments when we think little about it,—when, in truth, we are apt to be *off our guard*. It is this involuntary influence that determines our own character, both in the eye of the world and elsewhere. It is this by which we are, and must be, judged, both by our children and

the world around us; and, for aught I know, both here and hereafter. It is not at all difficult to make our lives worthy of imitation, and to seem to be united in heart and purpose on occasions, and for a short time. Voluntary effort, for this purpose, thousands have found it easy to sustain. But, to be what we should be when we are not being exhibited to the world; to be united in our great purpose of life, and to have all our conversation, in those moments when no eye seems to be upon us but the familiar faces of our own familiar friends, and when we are all alone, is not, after all, so easy a task. Yet, this is the task to which they are called who would come up to the true dignity of human nature, especially in the matter to which this chapter is especially devoted.

In short,—and to repeat what needs constant repetition,—if parents who are united in a noble purpose for life, wish to have family alliances of a similar kind on the part of those who are dearer perhaps to them than themselves, let them first see that they are themselves such as they should be. Then let them exert their influence in bringing together, from time to time, their own children and the children of those families in the neighborhood which are baptized into the same spirit, as frequently as possible,—at suitable hours and in suitable circumstances,—and let them fully understand each other and themselves, and learn to sympathize. In these circumstances, it may be reasonably hoped that the results

will, for the most part, be favorable; and that no preferences will exist, or be fostered and encouraged, which either the parties immediately concerned or their friends will have after occasion to regret.

If a parent lives in the love of progress, and his whole soul breathes forth nothing but the love of God and man, and if his children have caught the same spirit, why should he not expect such juvenile friendships, and such alone, as will result in usefulness and happiness? Why should the young person, of either sex, whose tastes have been formed in a pure and correct moral and social atmosphere, select, for the journey of life, a friend of the opposite sex, whose taste differs from his own? How, indeed, could such a result happen? Or, if exceptions should exist, will they be more numerous than just to confirm the general rule?

CHAPTER II.

COMMON SENSE.

WHEN I speak of common sense as second to none but unity of purpose, in the list of qualifications for matrimony, it is by no means with a view to singularity on the one hand, nor on the other hand to lay such emphasis on the term as shall lead to the suspicion that I use it in any other manner than that which has obtained general acceptance. For, though much has been said, in a learned way, about the changes which this quality undergoes in different ages and countries, it is manifest that, in common parlance, we have, for the most part, a definition of the term in which all agree. We simply intend by it, an abundance of *good* sense; or, as Locke the philosopher has called it, "sound, round-about sense." An individual who is distinguished from others, in respect of this commodity, possesses what we usually denominate a well-balanced character. He does the very things which might naturally be expected of him, and in the expected manner. He is, in short, practical, and not visionary or theoretical.

Now, this practical, well-balanced mind and char-

acter, in every condition of life, especially in the matrimonial relation, is, I repeat, one of the most indispensable pre-requisites to social and general happiness. Did all mankind possess it, how soon would all pedantry and affectation dwindle away and disappear! But, alas! while hardly an individual can be found who would not prefer to be charged with almost any thing else rather than with a deficiency of good sense, it is one of the rarest of qualifications, — as rare, almost so, as the gems of Golconda.

I will not say whether this quality is most rare among men or women; for I have no certain data by which to determine or settle a question so curious. Not a few, however, are inclined to give a verdict, in this respect, in favor of the latter. But it should be remembered that a part of what is credited, in woman, to common sense, belongs rather to a kind of intuition, by means of which she is enabled to detect those shades of resemblance or difference of character, in the individuals who are near her, which often escapes others. By this intuition or tact, she is greatly assisted in securing herself against the results of intrigue and dissimulation. As regards her good sense, in other respects, she is not unfrequently found behind the opposite sex; and, where this is the fact, is continually suffering for the want of it. But, on the other hand, we are not to assume — though some have maintained it — that woman is less gifted with this most indispensable element of human happiness

than the other sex, simply because she is more deficient in mechanical ingenuity or the power of invention.

For, though it is generally true that she has seldom if ever manifested any intuitive powers of invention, but has gone on, from age to age, to perform her various duties and offices, in the way of custom or tradition, without making so much as the feeblest attempt to shorten or abridge or simplify any of the most common household processes, may not this defect be chiefly attributable to her partial and defective education? This, as we all know, has made no demand upon her talent at observation, or her inventive powers; and has suffered her to remain comparatively dependent and helpless. It is certainly true, that, in cases of peril or of great and pressing necessity, woman has proved her inventive powers equal to the most extreme emergency whatever; as might be shown by a great extent and variety of anecdote. Admit that these emergencies have not unfrequently been of a kind which involved the safety of her offspring, or her other near relations, — circumstances which appear to change her whole nature, and make a heroine of one who, in other circumstances, would be timid and quiescent, — still, it is not *always* so; for there are not wanting on record various other instances of an entirely different kind, which should serve, at least partially, to redeem her from the

sweeping charge which has, in this respect, so often been made against her.

It is quite sufficient if we admit her general deficiency in this particular, as well as our own, and that good, sound, practical sense is rare with both sexes; and hence insist on the necessity of ascertaining the truth in the case, before entering into matrimony. For, small as such a matter may appear to many, especially in comparison with other things to be mentioned hereafter, it is nevertheless among the first, if indeed it is not, practically, the very first, except unity of purpose, in point of real intrinsic importance. An individual may have most of the remaining pre-requisites for matrimonial life, and some of them in high degree, and yet, if good sense be wanting, *all* seems to be wanting. On this point I must and do insist.

Let it be, then, a prominent object with parents, in bringing the children of a neighborhood together, to make a selection, if possible, of such as possess the good sound sense of which Mr. Locke makes so much. It may be difficult to do so, and yet preserve the character of good republicans; but it is worth the attempt. Let it ever be remembered, that, however agreeable, for the time, may be the company of the amiable, the cheerful, the voluble, and the brilliant, and however valuable many qualifications are which go to make up a perfect character, — and I have no disposition to undervalue any of them, — they

might all be practically overlooked, if not despised, in comparison with that which we are now considering. It is certainly one of the keys — if not the principal one — to unlock and bring out the treasures of permanent domestic happiness.

Nor is it so very difficult to ascertain whether this good sense abounds in the young who assemble in these afternoon circles I have mentioned, as some may suppose. There is such a vast difference, even at the very threshold of life, between those who possess it and those who do not, as to render the work of detection by no means difficult. It manifests itself in conversation, in study, in business, in amusement, — in short, everywhere.

They who are specially gifted with this high qualification, — whether it comes to them by inheritance or education, or both, — are very apt, as I have told you already, to say and do just the right thing, and in the right place and time. If engaged in conversation, they speak when they should; and what they say is generally acceptable. It may not be in accordance with the views of everybody; but it is always understood to be a faithful and just exponent of the views of the speaker. It makes a striking difference in children, as it does in adults; and is the cornerstone of character in both.

Some have appeared to suppose scholarship or intellectual brilliancy, and good sense, incompatible with each other. This notion is believed to be wholly

unfounded. It is sufficient to say, here, that, if the good sense which I have so much commended in this chapter is found to exist, we need not be troubled about the scholarship. There have been individuals in whom these traits were combined; there may yet be more such. A well-cultivated mind, superadded to good sense, would impart a lustre to character, to which no sensible husband or wife could possibly object.

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CHAPTER III.

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS.

IF doing right, under all circumstances, and at all hazards and sacrifices, were the fashion of this world, conscience would not be among us, as it now too often is, as a mere beggar or starveling. This viceroy of Heaven, — this internal monitor, — this still small voice of the Most High, — would then be heard, respected, honored.

But, strange as it might seem to an inhabitant of some other world into which sin had not entered, but one thing is so uncommon in society as a determination to do right, and that is the habit of carrying such a determination into effect. People do not mean to do wrong, — that is, they do not coolly make such a resolve. But, then, they do not coolly and deliberately determine, let what will come, to do right, — not one of a hundred. And as the stream cannot be expected to rise higher than its source or fountain, so no one does better than his resolutions; and, hence, few are really and truly conscientious.

I do not mean, by these remarks, to intimate that not one person in a hundred is ever conscientious, in

any circumstances. Few people can be found who are *never* conscientious. Indeed, most persons have conscience in something, — generally in the larger matters of life. Some carry their sacred regard for right and wrong through all the larger things of life, but entirely pass by the smaller matters.

Yet, no one, *in theory*, despises even the day of small things. Every one admits their importance, not only in themselves, but in their connections and relations. Every one knows that, as surely as the mightiest river is fed by the minutest sources, so the larger streams of human character are fed by a multitude of smaller ones. And yet, with this knowledge staring him fully in the face, who is there that governs himself accordingly?

Even the wise Solomon, in finding one man such as he desired in a thousand, would seem to have had some other standard of character in view than that of conscientiousness; at least, it must have been so, unless in the progress of three thousand years the world has greatly and unaccountably deteriorated.

I have spoken, in chapter III. of part I., of the hollowness and insincerity of human character, as it is now generally manifested. I have more than intimated that, for the most part, our looks, words, and actions often need to be deciphered as much as so many hieroglyphics. When we say one thing, we quite too generally mean another; and it was the remark of a very shrewd observer of men and things, that in

giving our reasons for our conduct, even to our best friends, we give any other reason than the true one. *That*, if given at all, said he, always comes last.

It is, most certainly, very agreeable to meet smiling faces, and to hear everywhere honied words. We naturally, and as I suppose instinctively, delight to receive from our fellow creatures, in all the daily walks of life, the usual external marks of kindness and esteem. We fancy ourselves in a very happy world. And doubtless it is preferable, on the whole, — this extreme, I mean, of our refinement, — to the savage or the half-civilized state. But, alas! how *much* better? How dreadful the thought (too often extorted from us) that all this outside show — these smiles and kind words — is unmeaning and insincere! How dreadful to be compelled to believe that all these external marks of regard are merely put on, like a Sunday dress, to be taken off when the occasion for wearing them is fairly over?

True, the habit of which I am speaking has become so general, and so inwoven with every thing else, that they whom we call our very best people not only forget, practically, that there is any moral wrong in it, but even contend for its necessity, if not for its rectitude. And the number is very small indeed of those who have any serious misgivings on the subject, such as we have been wont to call qualms of conscience.

Many, I admit, — I have admitted it already, — have their conscientious scruples about the right and

wrong of large matters, at least on occasions ; and a still larger number do not fail to complain of the want of this characteristic in others. Perhaps they hear a close, practical sermon, — though it must be acknowledged that such sermons are not so common as they ought to be, — and they say, within themselves, how exactly that hits the case of Mr. Culpable ! They are exceedingly conscientious in behalf of their neighbor ; but the sermon, however well pointed, seldom hits themselves.

How greatly to be desired, — and to be labored and prayed for, — the glad day when the whole of each rising generation shall be trained, from the first, to be exactly conscientious in all they say or do ! May we not hope for such a day ? Is not Christianity, when properly understood and applied, adequate to such a result ?

When this blest period shall arrive, and the little youthful band shall be selected by the thoughtful, judicious parents of some millennial neighborhood, and brought together for the purpose of spending an afternoon in what I have all along called the study of character, how delightful the thought, that, instead of coming together as it were with masks, they would come together as they truly were, — as they will appear on the day when all thoughts shall be revealed.

It was a most interesting indication of great conscientiousness in that heroically devoted Christian teacher and reformer, Mary Lyon, that she was ac-

customed to say, she feared nothing in the world but wrong-doing.

When young people meet in the afternoon, and spend their hours together, "speaking the truth in love," as the Scriptures call it; or, in other words, beholding one another as they truly are, what an opportunity will thus be presented,—not for courtship, in the old, hollow-hearted, disgusting way, but for finding out each other as they truly are. Here it may be ascertained whether they have that unity of purpose, as well as sound, round-about sense, already commented on. Conscientiousness, in the young, is ever beautiful; but how peculiarly so when manifested in the society of the sexes, especially when that society is the result of an attempt to accomplish this very purpose.

A young person of either sex, who is never heard to say, "I am wrong;" or, "I regret it;" or, "I am sorry," must either be a paragon of youthful excellence, or greatly and sadly deficient in that most indispensable qualification for matrimonial life which we are now considering. For, though few are willing, as society is now constituted, to confess their faults one to the other, yet, in a world where all are truly conscientious, it would be a pleasure to do so. I do not mean that there would be pleasure in the consciousness of having done wrong; but only in its confession. Repentance, says Mrs. Steel, is a painful, pleasing anguish; but, if so with repentance toward

God, it must be so with repentance and its manifestations toward our neighbor.

The poet Young takes occasion to say, somewhere: "The man that blushes is not quite a brute;" and, by parity of reasoning, the man, or woman, or child that does *not* blush must be at least brutal, if not quite abandoned. Blushing, in an individual of either sex, but particularly in females, is an indication that there are at least some remaining traces of conscientiousness; though it is not to be denied that even blushing itself may be carried to an extreme.

Some people are conscientious in one thing, but not so in others of equal, or perhaps superior, importance. It is not easy, perhaps, to account for this; but the fact is undisputed. Thus, I have known two persons, who were among the most conscientious of the whole human family, with this single exception, that they did not sacredly respect the rights of others, but would even on occasions defraud them of their rights and of their property.

Both of these individuals were among my most intimate acquaintances in early life, and both of them had, at first, my entire confidence. Judge, then, if you can, of my surprise when one of them, a farmer, — a man of wealth, too, — was convicted of stealing his neighbors' agricultural implements. But, though convicted of the crime, he was not publicly exposed; and I do not know that he ever repeated the transgression.

With the other I was still more intimate than with the first. And I have heard him say that, up to his eleventh year, —so great was his regard for truth,— he was not aware that he had ever said a word which was not just what it should have been. At this time, in a moment of temptation, he ventured to evade the truth, in a slight degree, just for once. But that little transgression—just for once—cost him six months of bitter repentance. Indeed, he was never quite easy, until he went to the individual concerned and made confession. For a long time, the reflection that he had departed from the truth—such is the power of conscience—would haunt him, night and day, like a spectre.

And yet, how curious and complex a thing this human nature is, after all. This same young man, so pure and conscientious in all things else, had such an intense desire for paper, quills, ink, etc., that he would not hesitate, on occasions, to purloin small quantities of stationery from the desks of his school-fellows. It is true that he stopped at this precise point; though it is quite a wonder that he did, for they who are so wanting in conscientiousness as to take the first step are apt to proceed from bad to worse. In general, too, as every one already knows, they who are wanting in conscientiousness in one thing are apt to be so in all others; or, at least, to become so.

Children who are trained to strict integrity in the family sometimes acquire a contrary character at

school, especially at the public or district school. It is, perhaps, in view of this fact, that not a few good people of late years have ventured to denounce the public school, as a nursery of vice and crime. Now, that children do sometimes acquire vicious habits at these schools — nay, that they do so very many times — there can be no doubt; but whether, on the whole, the children in well-educated families lose in this way more than they gain in some others, or, rather, whether the aggregate loss to society by these means is greater than the advantages they afford, is a question less easy of solution. Society itself, *as society*, has, I know, settled the question by continuing the schools; but it is unspeakably painful to witness the occasional departures from virtue and happiness which they seem to occasion.

Let me present, as an example of this district-school vice, as well as of the general tendency to a decline in the public conscientiousness, a very common occurrence in some of our schools and neighborhoods. Many a boy, who was never detected, while at home, with the slightest want of conscientiousness, has suddenly been found in the habit of appending to certain statements, known and proved to be false, “in a horn.” For, when afterward closely pressed, and fully convicted of saying a thing was so or so which proved otherwise, he would say, “I never said it was so, exactly; I only said it was so ‘in a horn.’” This

saving clause was added mentally, however; no one heard it but himself, and Him who hears all things.

Now, when a youth of either sex has gone thus far into the region of white lying, and can proceed along his beaten path without any qualms of conscience, the way is fully prepared for a still wider departure from strict rectitude of conduct. And, if there are no circumstances thrust in, either providentially or otherwise, to turn the delinquent back to virtue's path, there is no such thing as predicting, with any good degree of certainty, what the end may be. There is, in truth, a strong probability that these beginnings of depravity will continue to increase, till every degree of conscientiousness is wholly and forever obliterated.

If our public schools really are a means of exhausting or drying up the little streams of virtue which parental influence, with much patient toil, succeeds in establishing, and for a time in maintaining; and if they are, on the whole, so far, at least, as truth and conscience are concerned, no longer any thing but nurseries of vice,—and if they cannot be reclaimed in a moral point of view,—it most certainly becomes a serious question whether they should not be at once and forever abandoned.

Many among us look to the reading of the Bible, and to the other forms of daily devotion, as a check to the growing tendencies of the age to vice and crime; and seem to suppose that, if these can but be

retained, all may yet be well. Now, I would be the last individual in the wide world to banish these things from our schools; and yet, to rely on them alone, as a counteracting force in the case, is like relying on a mere reed to prop and sustain a falling building; or like interposing a single plank to stop the force of a mighty inundation.

There is, however, a strong and abiding conviction in my own mind, that the evil does not lie wholly in our schools; and that, if the family were such as it should be, and such as, indeed, without any miraculous agency it might be, the present deteriorating tendency of the schools could have no permanent existence. My belief is, that it would not be found to exist in the latter, if the seeds of evil had not, in the first place, been sown and watered and nurtured in the former.

And I judge thus, not so much from theory, as from long and patient and persevering observation. It has been my lot to be an inmate, for a period longer or shorter, of at least a hundred and fifty families, of various standing and character, from the highest to the lowest walks of social life, and in a majority of the States of our great confederacy. Such an experience, with my eyes open, and a desire to know something of human nature and character, most certainly entitles me to speak forth, with some degree of confidence, those convictions which, for a full quarter of a century, have been fastening themselves

on my mind. I have not hesitated to conclude that, whatever may be said of our schools, with regard to their moral or immoral tendency, the family itself is by no means a pattern of excellency, or, in a very striking degree, a nursery of conscientiousness. Nay, more,—must I say it?—I believe that, for the most part, a careful training of the conscience, in the family circle, is only as the exception, and not by any means the general rule.

But, if this is so, what is our hope, and whence? Verily, as it appears to me, in the reformation of the family, and, comparatively speaking, in nothing less than this. How and where shall the work begin? How and where, indeed, but at the precise point to which this whole chapter—and, indeed, in a sense, this whole work—would direct public attention. Conscientious young men and women, having found each other out, must join hand in hand for this purpose. Conscientiousness, in short, must be considered as a prominent and indispensable element in this divine union.

The work of reformation, then, I say, devolves everywhere upon the family. But, as nearly all existing families are tainted with the evil to which these remarks refer, what we have to do—and this is but to repeat and once more urge and enforce the doctrine of the preceding paragraph—is, to bring together in matrimony, if such a thing be possible, none but the truly conscientious. If this were firmly insisted upon by a few Christian parents, and if the

same thing were deeply impressed on the minds of their children, might we not hope that this most excellent trait of human character would, ere long, come to be a marketable commodity, rather than its very opposite?

"There, then," says the parent, of these dissimulating days, "Mrs. Simpson is coming; and I would almost as soon have seen Lucifer himself, this morning." In a moment the door-bell rings. "Good morning, Mrs. Simpson. Good morning, Mrs. Clark. Come in, Mrs. Simpson. How glad I am to see you. Sit down. **How** do you do?" etc.

All this, the members of the family, young and old, witness. Do they not wonder at such want of conscientiousness? If not, it is because they have so long witnessed the same tissue of hollow-heartedness, that they have become almost or quite as devoid of conscientiousness as their mother.

So in regard to a thousand other things which go to make up the series of words and events which we call daily life. In the relation of a story, in the detail of an event, in descriptions of character; in short, in almost every thing which takes place in most families, there is exaggerative coloring, slander, partiality, undue praise, or something which children, and those present, may plainly see indicates a want of conscientiousness, and tends to familiarize their minds with that which is wrong, till the wrong is not perceived. For this parental error becomes obnoxious to the charge which is implied in the following lines:

"Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet, seen too oft, familiar to the face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

If there be any thing to which the heads of most families, by their example, train their members, young and old, it is to the habit of yielding to the force of temptation, and of doing what, by their general principles and their frequent or continual confessions, is well understood to be wrong. "We ought to do so," or "I suppose it would be *better* to do so or so," is an expression we hear, almost every hour, in the best families; and from those, too, who, in theory at least, make it a general principle to do what is perfectly right toward God and man. I mean, here, just what I affirm. Many a parent; who professes to be the follower of Christ, from day to day and from hour to hour does that which he thus acknowledges before his children to be wrong, even before he does it; and yet kneels with the same children at the family altar, and practically claims to be the child of a Father who can never behold any form of iniquity with the least allowance. Where, then, is conscience? And how can children come up in life, with any fitness in this particular for becoming, in their turn, the heads of families, and the teachers of a new generation?

But the worst of all is, that these violations of the great law of conscientiousness have regard to the constantly recurring smaller matters of life, rather

than to the less frequently recurring larger ones. If it were otherwise, if we were to set a bad example to our children but once or twice a week, the tendency to sear the conscience, as with a red-hot iron, would not be so strong or so striking. It would be perceptible that we yielded to the force of great — perhaps peculiar — temptation ; and there might be a little allowance. But our preference to follow the customs of the world, and to keep on good terms with those around us, rather than do what is exactly right and thus keep on good terms with God, is seen in the ten thousand little things of life, that, though known to be wrong, are regarded as only a *little* wrong ; and thus conscience utters but feebly her monitory voice, even at the time. And, as we pass along in the journey of life, this same conscience, so often slighted and despised, at length ceases to admonish us. And then, alas ! what is man ? What is humanity ?

If this were an exaggerated picture of human society, — even our best, or Christian society, — there might be more of hope. But when we find it otherwise, — when we find the whole world, at least in this particular, not only guilty before God, on the general account, but convicted of wrong at its own tribunal, and yet persisting in the wrong, as if no wrong had been done, — what shall we say ?

And now, to make the application in the choice of a companion for life, what have the young, in their

friendly afternoon social interviews for the study of each others' character, to do? If their eyes are open to the plain, unvarnished truth, will they not be likely to find that David was not, after all, so very far from the truth as many have supposed, when in his haste he said, "All men are liars"? But, then, they must do their best. The stain is more or less deep in different individuals; so that, though all are guilty, there is yet a choice arising from the difference in the depth or intensity of that guilt. And on this choice, in a world like this, much more of human happiness depends than the young may be aware.

It will be an important point secured, when a young man or young woman can be found, — even though it should be one of Solomon's thousand, — who is fully conscious of the truth of what I am saying, and in view of the downward tendency of human society in this matter of conscientiousness, is determined to do every thing that can be done to postpone or prevent the final fatal issue. If a young person has clear and right perceptions on this important subject, and is possessed of the love and spirit of progress — with a large share of that sympathy and benevolence of which I am to speak hereafter, — may it not be expected that conscience, though benumbed, confounded, seared over, and down-trodden, will gradually revive, and assume her rightful province, and sit again on her throne of judgment?

CHAPTER IV.

SYMPATHY AND SENSIBILITY.

By sympathy, I do not mean, of necessity, any thing praiseworthy. It may be a virtuous or holy sympathy, or it may not. Or, rather, it may be found in both the good and the bad. Virtue, without sympathy, we can hardly expect to find; but we sometimes find sympathy without high virtue. Rousseau, and even some few individuals who could be named of quite abandoned character, were distinguished for sympathy.

This quality has been found even in savages. No people sympathized more with the celebrated Mungo Park, in his travels, than some of the African women he met with in the deep interior of that dark continent which savages claim by birthright. Let us have compassion, said they, on the poor white man who has come among us; for "he has no mother to bring him milk, and no wife to grind his corn."

* But let us consider a little what this sympathy is. Perhaps the idea may be expressed by contrasting it with that hardness of character which consists essentially in a want of sympathy, or at least of anything

like active sympathy, and is most admirably described by the late Rev. Sydney Smith in his "Memoirs."

"Hardness," says he, "is the want of a minute attention to the feelings of others. It does not proceed from malignity, or a carelessness of inflicting pain; but from a want of delicate perception of those little things by which pleasure is conferred or pain excited. A hard person thinks he has done enough, if he does not speak ill of your relations, your children, or your country; and then, with the greatest good humor and volubility, and with a total inattention to your individual state and position, gallops over a thousand fine feelings, and leaves in every step the marks of his hoofs upon your heart." While others, as he adds, have been keeping you in good humor with yourself, he "has been crushing little sensibilities, violating little proprieties, and overlooking little discriminations; and, without violating any thing which can be called a *rule*, or committing what can be denominated a *fault*, has displeased and dispirited you, from wanting that fine vision which sees little things, and that delicate touch which handles them, and that fine sympathy which this superior moral organization always bestows."

And now for the contrast. "Analyze," says he, "the conversation of a well-bred man who is clear of the besetting sin of hardness: it is a perpetual homage of polite good nature. He knows that you are admired, and he admires you, as far as is compatible

with good breeding. He sees that, though young, you are at the head of a great establishment; and he infuses into his manner and conversation that respect which is so pleasing to all who exercise authority."

But we have a higher example to encourage in us the exercise of a childlike sensibility and active sympathy than that of Rev. Sidney Smith. Paul says, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." Sympathy is thus made a duty. It is not left optional with us, as some in their haste have supposed. But the sympathy which the apostle would encourage is an *active* sympathy. It does not suffer us to stand still while we feel another's woe; it prompts to action in his behalf. It is not benevolence matured; but it is benevolence in embryo.

There is no place like the family for cultivating active sympathy. The schools may, it is very true, *sustain* it; they seldom, if ever, *originate* it. But it is among good children, in the family alone, that we find the beginnings of this qualification for happy and useful matrimonial life. Thus generated, cultivated, and matured, it is, of course, carried into adult life, to bless again a circle like that in which it originated. On the other hand, if not generated here, it is never generated. Its generation is by no means doubtful or equivocal.

Now, the young, of either sex, who think on the subject of marriage,—such marriage as is alone worthy of their thoughts,—might almost as well

look for happiness as the result of the union of foxes with bears or wolves, as of those who are destitute of sympathy. Nor need they hesitate with regard to the possibility of detecting it in those with whom they associate. For, though it may not be discoverable in those artificial and indiscriminate meetings of the young, where all is masked, and nothing open and natural, yet at home, even though neighbors and friends of varied age are present, it will show itself. The attempt on the one hand to counterfeit, and on the other to conceal it, would be alike fruitless. Here the true character, like murder, will "out."

Let those who would wed for life, not a mere fury, as Dr. Watts would say, but a human being abundant in active sympathy, be solicitous to become acquainted with the opposite sex under such circumstances and such alone as will give them an opportunity to ascertain the true character. For this there is, so far as I know, but one way. That way is before you. It is a plain way, — so plain that you need not err. Accident may, it is true, in a few cases of a hundred or a thousand, effect the same results; but it will never be safe to rely on accident or chance or hap-hazard, in a matter on which so much for both time and eternity depends. This world is a world of law and order, or is made to be such; and not a world of chance. Even chance itself, here, is subject to law.

CHAPTER V.

BENEVOLENCE.

TRUE benevolence is not a plant of native growth in this world,—some of our very benevolent theorists to the contrary notwithstanding. Dr. Good, a celebrated writer on medicine and morals, even goes so far as to maintain that man is naturally a lazy animal, and would not lift a finger if he could help it. But this is not true, without some good degree of qualification, as every one's observation — will he but keep his eyes open—may evince. Every child is active in his own favor,—he cultivates his own senses,—from the very first of his abilities to do so. He explores, unless by force restrained, even the lighted candle or lamp which is incautiously placed within his reach, — sometimes at the risk of severely scorching his fingers.

But the laziness of which so much is said and made, is with regard to others. The gospel command, “Bear ye one another’s burdens,” has, as yet, no meaning for the individual; still less the command, “Look not every man on his own things, but every one also on the things of others.” He naturally looks out for

himself; for others, he neither knows nor cares. He will not so much as lift his finger in their behalf. I do not mean to say that he is utterly destitute of sympathy of any sort, active or passive; for this is not true. In a passive way, his nature may be full of sympathy. He may rejoice most intensely with others, as well as weep with them; but he will do nothing for their relief. In a word, he has by nature no true, or active, or virtuous benevolence.

Is there, then, I may be asked, no true benevolence to be found except in those who have come under the direct influence of the gospel of Christ? The truth is, that the gospel — in other words, Christianity — has a tendency so to mould and shape the public opinion or sentiment, that not only neighborhoods but nations are, in very many particulars, entirely different from what they would have been without it. But this general influence is much more striking in its effects on the family than anywhere else. For this normal institution of the great Jehovah is, in some instances, more nearly approximated to the gospel or Christian system, in the particular we are now considering, than the church itself. I have seen many more families who, within the pale of the family circle itself, acted out the benevolence of the gospel, than I have of churches, — taken, I mean, as a whole.

Memory here recalls one family in particular, some of whose members were the very companions of my

childhood and youth. It consisted, in all, of ten persons. I must admit, in the premises, that I was less familiar with this family than I might have been, but for the fears of my friends that I should imbibe, in greater or less degree, their religious heresy. I will not stop now to say what this supposed heresy was, except to observe that it was a merely theoretic affair, principally confined to the *head* of the *father*, while in his study; having very little influence on the true character and life of him or his family. They had all ate of the food and drank of the milk of puritanical New England; and were not, in essence, very easily changed. And yet, despite of their practical puritanism, on the one hand, and their theoretic heresy on the other, they went very far beyond the puritans in their very active benevolence or goodness to one another. I have never known, either before or since, a family of eight children who carried out, to such an extent, the practical benevolence of the gospel of Christ, as did this. To bear one another's burdens; for each to esteem the other better than himself; and to do to all around them as they would have been done by, seemed as natural to them all as to breathe, eat, or sleep.

Was there a privation to be undergone which must, of necessity, be borne by one of them, no brother or sister was heard to say, "I can't undergo it; Samuel or Henry must." Every one was ready and anxious to bear the burden. So, on the other hand, whenever

a favor was to be received, which was of such a nature as to be enjoyed by only one of the company, no one of them was disposed or accustomed to say, "I will have it," but the very contrary: "Some other individual may have it, I will do without it;" was their general language. And it was, as we may be well assured, the language of the heart.

But while we find, here and there, in a family, the spirit of benevolence, we find much oftener the spirit of downright selfishness, not to say unkindness. Such a spirit is greatly ominous of ill to human society, whenever and wherever we find it, and should be carefully avoided. Exorcism is needful in other times than during the first promulgation of Christianity.

Benevolence, in young or old people, should manifest itself in all our ways, words, and actions. It should reach, and pervade, and light up the very features. The human face, at least in the family, should always shine, like that of Moses when he came from the mount of God. It should indicate more than a general cheerfulness; it should reveal, to those around, sources of internal satisfaction, of which the world in general would otherwise be utterly ignorant.

The difference between benevolence and selfishness, especially among the youthful members of a family, is like the difference between light and darkness. And yet,—I am sorry to say it,—it is a difference of which multitudes among us know nothing, because they never had an opportunity of comparison. Each

child secures to himself as many advantages, favors, or privileges as he can, without giving downright offence; and throws upon his companions as many as he can of the privations.

Now, in the afternoon visits or parties of young people, where they are made quite an every-day concern, so that no one appears disposed to act a borrowed part, it is to be expected that numerous opportunities will occur for testing each other's benevolence. In their varied engagements and employments while together, whether amusement, reading, conversation, singing, or even eating or drinking, their different shades of character will manifest themselves most unmistakably. They cannot be concealed.

A young person, male or female, who esteems others better than himself, will *give place* to others. An individual, for example, wishes to pass along where there is hardly sufficient room. Now, no one who has ever taken but the very first lessons of benevolence will continue to sit still and block up the way, so as to compel his neighbor to say, "You will oblige me by letting me pass." He will be much more likely to anticipate the want, and offer a passage before that want begins to be felt, than to wait to be asked. Nor will such a young person suffer others to stand a long time while he enjoys a comfortable seat. He will prefer to stand a long time himself, if any one must be thus incommoded.

This manifestation of preference will not be forced,

or accompanied by grudging or display ; but voluntary. It will not be designed merely "to be seen of men." It will come from the heart. I know there is a species of benevolence that apes the real, but is, after all, only a substitute for it. Yet even this seems to me preferable to downright selfishness,—to the spirit which seems to say, "I do not care"; or which, at the least, does not care, unless some advantage is likely to accrue to itself.

The celebrated John Foster, of England, has, in his writings, somewhere told us that this *do not care* feeling, in man, or woman, or child, is the very essence of depravity. He may be correct, for the most part ; he probably is so. And yet, I have seen those who were careless and reckless in one particular, and not so in any other. But it does not follow, from the foregoing premises, that he who *does* care for his fellow beings possesses a full share of gospel benevolence. It proves, indeed, that the gospel, by its general influence, has been where he is, and has unveiled to him the beauty of imitating the right, the true, and the benevolent, as a means of promoting his own happiness. Or, if we admit no more, it shows that he has been formed to benevolent *habits* by the efforts of those who lived where the gospel was proclaimed, even if it had no power over their own hearts.

Now, we may not always be able to distinguish between that benevolence which is real — which pervades

the heart, I mean, and flows from it—and that which is superficial. Here, I most cheerfully admit, there is room for mistake. But even a mistake, on this point, would not be so fatal as the mistake of fastening one's affections on an individual who does not care for others any more than Napoleon did, viz., just as far as they are a means of promoting his own happiness or accomplishing his own ends.

It may perhaps be thought that an attachment which is genuine will, in the matrimonial career, rise superior to all such considerations as the foregoing; and that an individual who is regarded as but another part of ourselves will reap all the benefits, at least ultimately, which benevolence itself could insure,—that the love of sex, in other words, is so strong as to compel us to a benevolent course toward the individual who is its object.

This view of the case embraces both truth and error. It includes much of truth, if we assume that the love spoken of is any thing more elevated than the mere love of person, or what might be called instinctive or animal love. But herein is the difficulty, and hence comes a mixture of error. We have no guaranty that the sexual passion, in those who do not possess either the genuine or the pseudo-benevolence, will rise so high as to include any good degree of regard for intellectual and moral worth. Such love as this last will be likely to end with the personal

enjoyment alluded to, instead of generating any real benevolence toward the object of its gratification.

There is no safety, in short, in a union for life with an individual who is known to be deficient in benevolence. Nor should we be satisfied, at least till we are compelled to it, with small measures of this cardinal qualification. I say till we are compelled to it; because it must be admitted that the genuine article itself is a rare gem. If we set out together, in the conjugal career, with full faith in each other's large benevolence, we shall, even then, have sufficient opportunities to *subtract* from it, as we journey on. Trained as we now are, the current of selfishness, though repressed or turned aside, or for a time partially exhausted, is ever liable to reappear, and to burst forth on the fairest fields of human life,—to mar and scathe even the heaven of conjugal and domestic happiness.

We must, however, be greatly careful to distinguish between that genuine kindness to those around us which is so desirable, and withal so commendable, and that excess of kindness which is ever liable to shoot beyond its mark. I grant, indeed, that, philosophically speaking, such a thing as *excess of kindness* cannot exist, any more than excess of truth or justice. It would certainly be wrong to say that we can become so just or so true as to be unjust or false; and can it be a whit more correct, a shrewd inquirer may ask, to talk about an excess or extreme of kindness? But there certainly is an excess of this qualification in

point of fact, whether we are able to explain its origin or mode of operation or not. It may be morbid or diseased; and, hence, may properly belong to a chapter on health, rather than to one on benevolence,—still, it has an existence.

I have said it may be morbid or diseased; but I recall. It is, most manifestly, neither more nor less than kindness or benevolence grafted upon a diseased nervous system; and is, in these days, no uncommon thing. We may find it everywhere, both within the pale of conjugal life, and beyond it.

Such a manifestation of over-kindness, or rather of genuine kindness grafted upon a diseased or over-excited nervous system, is found wherever you find the individual. It makes little difference whether she is among children or adults; among friends or strangers; among men or domestic animals. Her acute sensibility leads her, wherever she is, to over-act. The very chickens, of which she has the general oversight, alarmed by a hawk, or estranged by distance from their mother, cry out for fear, or from sheer loneliness. The over-watchful, over-tender individual, beholding it, leaves at once her circle of higher duties, or at least of greater usefulness, and flies to their relief; and that relief consists not in providing for their security or their maternal society, but in feeding them; or in other words, in ministering to their gratification. No matter if they have been fed but half an hour before.

The same will be her treatment of humanity. Is a very young child distempered, wakeful, and worrisome? He must be fed! Does a pin prick him? Feeding is the remedy! She can think of nothing else. Is he crying from pain induced upon his bowels in consequence of an over-loaded and abused stomach? Feeding, again, is the supposed cure-all; and is, without scruple, resorted to.

So with every thing else, and with everybody else over whom she has control or influence. Feeling, — mere feeling, — without restraint from any higher power, with her, reigns predominant. I may say still more. I may say, again, it is *diseased* feeling. It is that state of mind and heart which leads thousands to give money to the sturdy beggar who asks for it, when the avails of an employment, which he would probably spurn indignantly, would be far better for him, in the end.

And yet, I must still admit, that this very diseased benevolence is better for her and for everybody than sheer selfishness. Doing good produces love to the objects on whom and for whom our charity is bestowed, much faster than *receiving* good makes us love the giver. I never wholly despair of an individual of either sex, merely because his benevolence has run to excess. I still hope for a cure of the diseased nerves and brain; and that such cure will leave behind it some love and charity and benevolence which are genuine, and from which, as from good seed sown

on a duly prepared soil, society may, in the end, reap an abundant harvest.

Matrimonial life, however, is too valuable, as well as too short, to admit of much delay in the work to which genuine gospel benevolence should prompt the parties to a union. One great object should indeed be to make each other, as well as their dependants, happy; but it should be a higher object still to establish a basis or platform on which solid happiness can securely stand. This is neither more nor less than a sound physical constitution, general intelligence, genuine benevolence, and filial and general piety. To make good is higher and nobler than merely to make happy.

Whenever, by interchange of visits or otherwise, we have found an individual, who, to all external charms and recommendations, no less than to all other known qualifications, mental and moral, unites a zeal to do good, which, being enkindled and renewed with the first waking moments, never tires except when the body tires, because nature calls aloud for renewal, and never wholly goes out till lost in sleep, — which burns with the first dawn in the morning, and accompanies every word, thought, and action during the live-long day, — we may depend upon it, we have found a prize worth attaining. Beauty, rank, accomplishments, wealth, though of little value without this standard cardinal qualification, are, nevertheless, in themselves unobjectionable. I might concede even more in their

favor. They are of great value. They polish what is worth polishing, and grace what is worth the pains.

Alone in the world, — a mere solitary, — how much may the benevolent individual accomplish, as in the case of a Fry, a Dix, or a Howard; but, sustained by the strong arm of a judicious and kindred alliance, how rapidly and certainly must it gladden the world, and hasten the latter-day glory! Viewed in the light of philosophy, marriage has always been undervalued even by its best friends. It is time it were regarded somewhat as God regards it, and used for the purposes which his heart cherishes.

CHAPTER VI.

MODESTY AND DELICACY.

MODESTY and delicacy, like consistency, — when truly genuine, are more attractive than the most costly jewels or the most splendid apparel. They not only adorn the body, but they are ornaments of the mind. In matrimonial life, they are particularly indispensable. There are, however, the false as well as the true.

Nor are either of these qualifications confined to the female sex. Modesty — true modesty — sits gracefully on everybody, young and old, male or female, at home or abroad. It is more than an ornament, — it is almost a virtue. So of true delicacy. There is a beauty in it, that can hardly be expressed in words, and can only be understood in conduct.

Modesty, however, should not be confounded with affectation; for the latter is as disgusting as the former is ornamental. It is by no means the sign of a pure heart and of genuine modest worth to be as ready as some people are to attach immodest thoughts to such actions and words as, to another with a purer heart, would awake no such impressions. And yet

such affectation of modesty is not uncommon. "Sometimes," says an eminent writer, "a scrupulosity in words, with an unusual delicacy, and liability to take offence, is intended to compensate, in the reckoning of conscience, for a violation of those engagements which connect male and female in holy matrimony." There is too much reason for such a remark, despite of its severity.

But modesty, in its largest sense, covers much more ground than is implied in the remarks of the preceding paragraph. It manifests itself by appropriate language and actions, springing from a heart which breathes, in man or woman, nothing but love and good will to those around. It is liable, I know, to degenerate into timidity and bashfulness; but this extreme should be avoided, as much as possible, by a proper education. There is no virtue in bashfulness at any age; though it sometimes has its apology in feeble nerves and timid childhood. But there is no incompatibility between modesty and true boldness; indeed, in the formation of a perfect character, they belong together.

Modesty in behavior, while it does not permit us to push ourselves forward in company, does not require that we should keep as far out of sight as possible. It only requires that we should keep our proper place; or, rather, that we should *fill* our place, — that we should be found just where good sense, in the circumstances, would demand. There is no

indelicacy in endeavoring to make a just estimate of ourselves, and in governing ourselves accordingly.

It is worthy of a passing remark, that what modesty and delicacy require in particular countries, would be greatly out of place in others. Thus, in some parts of the world, it is regarded as improper for a wife to eat in the company of her husband; and in others for a woman to unveil more than one of her eyes. There are, in this respect, a thousand foolish notions abroad; nor are they wholly confined to savage and barbarous nations. The difference in regard to dress is not less striking. While the oriental women consider it immodest, and consequently disgraceful, to exhibit any part of their person, the Romans of old were but scantily covered. And there are fashions abroad, at the present day, which are almost equally on the extreme: such as the very low dresses of females, which are sometimes seen; and the ridiculously tight garments of the other sex.

I have spoken as if it were very desirable, in males or females, that, in endeavoring to be truly modest, we should, if possible, avoid the extreme of bashfulness; and it most certainly is so. And yet, if an approach to one extreme or the other is unavoidable, that of bashfulness is preferable to a large share of boldness,—for the latter is apt to degenerate into vulgarity, if not impudence. The bashful person, especially the bashful female, will at least be deemed inoffensive, if not pleasing or amiable; while the impertinent,

the assured, the vulgar, and the impudent, will be worthless, if not despicable.

It is even said, by some, that bashfulness or diffidence, especially in the female sex, has its advantages; at least, in the view of others. The bashful person, we are told, is usually better than she appears to be. Dr. Beattie says of the bashful and timid, "If they are attentive and respectful to their company, bashfulness will not injure them in the opinion of the discerning; it will rather raise their prepossessions in their favor." Certain it is, that the individual who is diffident is himself the greatest sufferer; while the over-bold, and vulgar, and impudent, both injure themselves and offend those around them.

Blushing is one of the frequent accompaniments of modesty and delicacy; and, when not in excess, is an indication of virtue rather than of vice. I have already quoted the saying of Dr. Young, which is equally applicable here. Blushing is certainly less derogatory from virtuous character than that indifference which has sometimes been termed unblushing boldness, or brazen-facedness. It may be cultivated, on the one hand; or gradually destroyed, on the other. The frequent anxious endeavor to prevent or check it, is the most certain method I am acquainted with of increasing its influence; while mingling in society and forgetting ourselves — for it often has one of its principal sources in an excessive desire to

secure the good opinion of others — has a tendency in the other direction.

But the most likely means of gradually removing both modesty and delicacy, with all their accompaniments, is the practice of immorality. Not only immoral actions, but coarse and vulgar language, have the same tendency. The mighty river is fed by numerous tributaries; and these tributaries have their ten thousand smaller sources. He who would dry up the stream must exhaust or dry up its sources.

It may be useful to give one striking example of genuine modesty; though it shows itself in so many ways that one is at a loss how to make his selection.

When Icarius had failed in his efforts to induce Ulysses, his son-in-law, to remain in Sparta, he turned to his daughter, Penelope, and implored her. But here, too, he failed, and Ulysses and Penelope fled in a chariot. Icarius pursued and overtook them, and renewed his importunity. Ulyssus, wearied out, told Penelope that, though he greatly desired her company, she might do as she pleased about returning with her father. Icarius, greatly encouraged, began anew to press her on the subject, upon which she deeply blushed and drew her veil over her face, without speaking. Perceiving what her preference was, and charmed with her manner, as well as her loyalty to her husband, he assented to her wishes, and erected on the very spot a statue to modesty.

Some persons are so readily affected by what they

see and hear, that they can never conceal their emotions. If any thing novel or unpleasant is intimated, they blush; if any thing ludicrous or bearing the least approach toward it, they laugh; if sorrowful, they weep; if unfair, they are excited by anger; if attractive, by love; if repulsive, by hatred. It is not modesty, however, exactly—it is an excess of constitutional sensibility. They are like a feather carried about by every breeze.

There is in some individuals, especially of our own sex, a natural coarseness and vulgarity. They do and say every thing wrong. If they speak at all, they halloo; if they have something to say to one or two persons only, they speak as if all the world were to hear it. No matter what the subject may be,—science, politics, love, or religion,—it is all the same to them. Caution, they have none; secretiveness, very little. They *may* intend well, they certainly do not intend ill. But, by their destitution of either modesty or delicacy, they become disagreeable companions and unworthy confidants. Their business is the business of everybody, and what they know of you is public property. Their opinion, too, on all subjects, must be heard, they seem to think; and wisdom must live or die with them.

Now, if it is disagreeable to pass an hour—a single short hour—in the society of such a person, how much more difficult must it be to spend a whole life

in his society? But a word on this topic must, to the wise, be sufficient.

Can it be necessary that I should here allude to certain gross violations of the laws of modesty and delicacy which are far enough from being infrequent in our very best families? Will people of good sense and chaste general conduct set the example, before their children and dearest friends, — some of whom are as dear to them as their own lives, — of immodest and unchaste expressions; and even of coarse and foul innuendos? Let me close this chapter with a single paragraph, extracted from one of our most popular books on this subject. It is applicable both here and everywhere else.

“Let us, therefore, beware of an improper or indelicate word or look, or even *thought*. Let us set a guard over the thoughts; for it is out of the abundance of these that not only the mouth speaks, but the hands act.”

CHAPTER VII.

CHEERFULNESS AND CONTENTMENT.

BENEVOLENCE, modesty, and delicacy, have all a cheerful tendency ; especially the former. And yet, there have not been wanting benevolent persons of *sombre cast*. They were trained thus. Or, perhaps, having been trained cheerfully, they afterward became diseased in body ; and a morbid condition of the brain and nerves — and perhaps, too, of the heart, stomach, and liver — becomes so fastened on them as to change their very features, and sometimes to give them the most wo-begone countenance imaginable.

Some persons, from principle, almost shudder at the thought of being cheerful. They are willing to be cheerful, — possibly they are so already, — but they hardly dare to justify themselves in it. They regard it somewhat as they do the animal appetites, — a condition of mind and heart ever liable to mislead them, — as having no moral advantages, and to be enjoyed or indulged, if indulged at all, almost by stealth.

If such people are told that no one has so good a right to be cheerful as they who fear God and love

mankind, they assent to it with their understandings, while they hardly dare to mean so in their hearts. They find it extremely difficult—trained as they have been, in the customary manner and with the usual popular feelings about cheerfulness—to get rid of the idea that a smiling countenance and buoyant feelings are unsanctified elements of human character; and most of them retain it, in spite of their better judgment, all their lives. It is quite possible—nay, in fact, it is most probable—that they have early listened to the common saying, that our Saviour, though he often wept, was never known to laugh. But suppose this were true of our Saviour,—what then? Cannot a person be cheerful without laughing? Some of the most cheerful persons I have known, seldom if ever laughed, and never boisterously; nor is boisterous mirth, or even noisy cheerfulness, to be at all commended.

But, then, it can never be proved that our Saviour did not laugh. The statement, so much reiterated, that he did not, is wholly gratuitous. He was most certainly a man of sorrows, or, a man that had his sorrows; for he was tempted or tried in all the various ways to which it is usual for human nature to be subjected, and I might even say in many more. But, then, he went up and down among men as one of them; and, while he bore their sorrows and thus showed his sympathy with them in that direction, he also rejoiced with those who were joyful. Indeed,

there are not wanting evidences that his temperament and tendencies had in general a cheerful aspect.

Contentment is one step towards cheerfulness. No discontented person, at least, would be likely to wear a smile habitually on his countenance. And, on the other hand, show me a cheerful person, and you will show me, as a general rule, a contented individual. But did not our Saviour and Paul inculcate contentment as a Christian virtue?

Now, if there is nothing in contentment which is positively wrong, I am sure there is much in it which is right, both in its tendencies on individual health, and on the intellectual and moral well-being of society. And I am sure it is right, on account of these tendencies. Can that habitual tendency and temper be otherwise than right, which makes families everywhere, as a whole, and the members of families individually, healthy and happy?

The difference between a cheerful family and one of the opposite character—like the difference between cheerful and melancholy or fretful individuals—is almost as great as the difference between light and darkness. And, in laying the foundation walls, so to call them, of a family, of course few qualifications are more earnestly and perseveringly to be sought after, in male or female, wife or husband, than general or habitual cheerfulness.

And, in the search for this characteristic, let me say, nothing is more important than an introduction

to the family *as it is*, and not to a circle whose members have convened with the full intention of acting a borrowed part, — or, in other and plainer words, of mutually deceiving and being deceived. In the bosom of the family, and even in the circle which convenes in the afternoon within the family precincts, the character will come out, sooner or later, — it is inevitable. And, if there be habitual cheerfulness on the one hand, or habitual melancholy on the other, or a frequent alternation from one to the other, or from cheerfulness to fretfulness, they must be dull learners who do not, sooner or later, make the discovery.

But I must present a few reasons for believing that there is much in habitual cheerfulness which is not only right in its tendencies, individually and collectively, but *very* right. I will endeavor, in the detail, to be as brief as possible.

In the first place, it affects favorably the bodily health. Melancholy and fretfulness — its frequent opposites — are, in their tendencies on health, the reverse of this. I know a multitude of people, young and old, who are melancholy or fretful, as the effect of feebleness or ill health ; but, then, it is also true that the indulgence of these feelings will react on the general system, and render the health still worse. Indeed, it would not be going a step beyond the naked truth, were I to affirm that I never yet knew an individual, — no, not even a young man or a young

woman,—who had long indulged habitually in feelings of melancholy, fretfulness, or even general discontent, whose health was at the same time perfect.

There will be more or less derangement of the liver and stomach. Anger, it is well known, affects the liver injuriously; and so does the occasional outburst of fretfulness or impatience. But it may not be known to all,—it probably is not,—that habitual discontent or melancholy, above all, habitual over-anxiety or fretfulness—characterized as sometimes it is by the word worrying—has uniformly, in greater or less degree, the same effect. But this it certainly has.

The brain and nervous system are exceedingly liable to be affected, more or less, in the same circumstances. Liable, did I say? The result is certain, inevitable; it cannot be avoided. This diseased condition of the nerves may not have proceeded so far as to acquire a name. It is not *yclept tic-doloreaux* or *neuralgia*. It may not be *hypochondria* or *St. Vitus' dance*. It may not even have been called, by any medical man, *fidgets*. But no matter for that; it is disease, and there is no permanent help for it till the cause is removed, by the restoration of general content and cheerfulness. Dosing and drugging may palliate, or even postpone, but they cannot cure it.

Nor does the skin of the melancholic, or fretful, or discontented man or woman perform its various offices as it ought. In the Divine scheme, the skin is

appointed to do a vast deal of hard work. This work, too, is very important. But, in order to have it fulfil its mission, it must be plump, active, and energetic. I do not say it must be flushed,—it is quite sufficient if it have a true flesh color. But a pale, or **sallow**, or shrunk skin, is unfavorable. No such **skin** performs, with full energy, its appointed work. It is more or less crippled, and disease is the result.

But I have not room or time for particulars. My object, in particularizing thus far, is simply to illustrate the position that the opposites of cheerfulness, in all their varied degrees, tend to disease, while cheerfulness and contentment, in all their degrees, are healthful. For if the opposites of cheerfulness and content have a tendency, when they have full dominion, to severe disease of the brain, liver, or other organs, must not the habitual influence of cheerfulness be likely to prevent these results, or even gradually effect a cure?

Such being the tendency and final effect of habitual cheerfulness, is not the conclusion inevitable that it is right in the sight of Him who established its connections and tendencies?

Its effects on the exterior or outposts of the system are also worthy of our high consideration. How vast the difference between the eye, the voice, the words—the gait, even—of the man or woman, young or old, of habitual cheerfulness, and the individual who has fallen under the influence of melancholy, fretfulness, or discontent! One walks erect, looking upward,

—heavenward. The other bends, as with years ; and seems almost ready to crumble and fall into the earth from which he came.

But if these things are so,— I repeat,—how greatly important is it that, in the selection of a companion for life, a suitable reference is had to this qualification ! It is bad enough for those who are advanced in life to come under the habitual influence of melancholy, or any other depressing, diseased tendency ; but when the young, in the very morning of life, do so, what is their hope ? And what is the hope of those who are united with them for life ? Let it be possible that a reformed rake makes the best husband : it would scarcely be possible to hope for the reformation of one who is habitually fretful. He will probably fret on, to the end of his career, and perhaps fret himself to death, and everybody else who comes in contact with him.

Do not misunderstand me. You are not to look for absolute perfection here below. It may germinate here ; but I greatly fear it will, for some time to come, be an exotic,—destined to bloom with unfading verdure only in the celestial regions. Still, there are approximations to be made. And, the greater the difficulty of finding absolute perfection, in the progress of our search, the greater the necessity, if not the obligation, of coming as near to it as possible.

“ Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thy

eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment," has often been construed into a divine reprobation of general cheerfulness; for it is thought, by many, that the wise man spoke this—at least the first part of it—in irony. But I do not so understand him. My belief is that he simply meant to say: "Be joyful,—cheerful,—as becomes your years; but remember, *always*, your accountability." Solomon was not greatly given to irony; though, in his denunciations, he was sometimes very severe.

I wish the young to understand that, in encouraging cheerfulness, and the selection of cheerful companions for life, I have no intention to encourage some of the things which come under the general name of cheerfulness. Low punning, coarse jokes, constant attempts at fun and wit, common blackguard, unchaste innuendoes, and even vulgarity, are usually under the guise of cheerfulness; but what young woman would look for these as proper qualifications of a husband?

There is, moreover, a time for all things,—at least, for all things which are ever proper to be done. If punning, joking, and loud laughing are ever tolerable, it is not in mixed society, nor in the society of the young. It should be reserved for the society of rowdies, places of resort of fire companies, the barracks of soldiers, etc. I do not think females should have much to do with tolerating these things, under any circumstances.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOOD TEMPER.

MUCH that comes under this head may have been included in the preceding chapters. In truth, it is rather difficult to believe that a young person who is benevolent, conscientious, modest, and cheerful, can be otherwise than good-tempered. Yet a few things remain to be said on the subject, which may not only be pertinent, but indispensable.

Many people possess what might be called an extreme temper; by which I mean, that they are too violent, or too revengeful. Thus, I have known some who were so susceptible, that the slightest irritation would rouse them to a pitch of anger that rendered them, for the time, like so many maniacs. Others, however, in the moment of provocation, seem wholly unmoved; and yet never, as it were, forget it. Which extreme is most to be dreaded, where both are intolerable, is not easy to say. The Scriptural injunction is, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath;" and yet, on occasions, the same spiritual guide appears to condemn all sorts and degrees of angry feeling.

There are certain curious combinations of the violent and the revengeful. Thus, I have known one man who could bear almost any large public abuse, while a misdemeanor on the part of a child or intimate friend would rouse his ire to the highest pitch. Another whom I knew could bear every thing like a philosopher, except certain little things, which, to many, would have been no trial of temper at all, or almost none. Thus, for example, when no human being, so far as I know, could have stirred his wrath while on his guard, a hen or a cat out of its proper place would fill him with rage to a degree which was astonishing. A chicken, for example, coming into his office or place of business, would have made him, for the time, a madman.

Now, the young, in the study of character, should be able and successful in detecting such striking eccentricities of temper as these; and this, not only for the sake of their own happiness, but that of those who are to come after them. The children of the eccentric sometimes inherit a worse patrimony than mere eccentricity. Too often the latter in the parent, becomes insanity in the offspring.

The young, of both sexes, not unfrequently make one capital error with regard to the government of the temper. If the anger or irritation has existence, they say, that is, *if it is there*, it may as well come out as be withheld. Now, this is not so. He who suppresses a certain measure of anger to-day, will

repel or suppress an equal measure of this feeling with greater ease to-morrow ; and with greater ease, still, the next day ; and so on, for aught I know, without limit.

It is more than probable that we are, as yet, wholly ignorant of the extent to which this power of controlling the feelings and restraining the temper may be carried by those who set out early enough in life, and pursue the plan with energy to the end of their days. Mankind have hitherto sought pleasure as their chief good, rather than excellence. Hence they have been more anxious for victory over every thing and person else than over their own selves.

Whenever it shall be deemed a point of sufficient importance, by the young of our schools and families, to search for a happy temper, as one of the indispensable qualifications for matrimonial life, I do not think it will be found a task at all difficult,—especially if the society they move in is select ; the place of meeting, home ; and the homes we have, belong to the kingdom of light, and not to that of darkness.

CHAPTER IX.

SIMPLICITY.

NOT a few among us entirely misapprehend the meaning of the term simplicity, confounding it with weakness or silliness. Such individuals, therefore, should there be any such among my readers, may smile to find this trait of character placed among the pre-requisites to happy marriage. "Who is there," they may perhaps say to themselves, if not to their friends, "that would be willing to marry a simpleton?"

But simplicity in man or woman, and in the old and the young,—particularly the latter,—is not only a virtue, but a rare virtue. I have already had occasion to complain, more than once, of the general heartlessness—to give it a name no more opprobrious—of human language and conduct. What I mean, then, by simplicity, should be sufficiently obvious, when I affirm that it is the very opposite of what we often witness in the world around us. It is, as I would define it, entire plainness of language, dress, and conduct,—including speech,—so that every thing said and done may mean just what it appears to mean to the veriest child and the meanest capacity.

Of the vast importance of simplicity of speech everywhere in life, one can hardly say too much, especially as this good old-fashioned virtue is every day passing into desuetude. In studying human character in the juvenile circle, we should be careful to search for simplicity as a diamond of the first water.

It will not be difficult to detect and distinguish simple language in the social circle, were it only on account of its rarity. It will be like a black sheep, or a white ox, among our numerous flocks and herds. It will, moreover, attract you on account of its singular sweetness. It cannot otherwise than shed a charm all around, which, to those who are not simple themselves, will be irresistible. Remember, however, that if you should fail in your search for it, as possibly you may, you are not thereby absolved from the obligation to practise it yourselves. On the contrary, your responsibility and obligations are thereby greatly increased and strengthened.

With simplicity of dress you will have greater difficulty. So strong is the repugnance of modern times to what would be the dictate of good sense in every age, when unwedded to conventionalism, that the garb of simplicity, in the young and gay circle, may pass for quakerism, if for nothing worse. But, if you can do no more, you can, at least, compel your own head in the right direction; for, surely, when we take the world of dress as it now is, nothing is so much needed as this very rare virtue of simplicity.

“Duplicity of conduct,” says a popular writer, “however common among us, is equally despicable with duplicity of language.” Indeed, is it not more so? Who is there, that, though hypocritical himself, does not despise a hypocrite in conduct? And who that uses duplicity does not *despise* duplicity when he sees it elsewhere?

The truth is, that duplicity of language and duplicity of conduct—and, I might add, in dress and equipage and almost everything else—commonly go together, nor are they easily separable. And, as the writer whom I have just now quoted has said, “avoid both,” avoid everything which is the opposite of simplicity, “as you would the breath of the pestilence.” Cultivate simplicity, in the fear of the Lord, with all the earnestness which an apostle of eighteen hundred years ago would have enjoined, had you been under his special care and direction.

But our young people—many of them—dislike quotations from Scripture. Very well, then, I will leave them to their own good sense, at least, in this particular. Besides, it must not be forgotten that a mistake made in the business of choosing such an intimate friend as a wife or husband, is not the mistake of a day merely, but, as it were, of a life. If duplicity or hypocrisy are unpleasant, and simplicity desirable, for a day or an hour, how much more so is it for a whole life-time? Nor is this all. Its effects extend, as you know, to other and unborn generations. They go with us to eternity.

CHAPTER X.

SOCIABILITY.

THE opinion has prevailed, in certain would-be wise circles of society, that taciturnity is a mark of wisdom ; and loquacity, or talkativeness, of the contrary. Indeed, it is not a slander to say that such an impression still exists, notwithstanding the influence of facts of a thousand years' standing to confront it.

I had a neighbor, once, who was reputed, both by friends and foes, at home and abroad, to be the wisest man in the whole region. My early impressions, in this respect, were peculiarly striking. I was led to look up to him as a kind of superior being. Yet, no man whom I ever knew said less. And judge, reader, if you can, of my surprise, when a longer and very intimate acquaintance convinced me in the face of every prepossession, that he was silent for the very natural reason that he had little to say !

The native American Indians have had a reputation not unlike this. Their taciturnity, on occasions, especially in public, has been attributed to their wisdom. But our final experience has been that, even in these sons of the forest and children of nature,

silence has sometimes another cause than mere unwillingness to expose their own weakness. Both Indians and uncivilized men would unquestionably, at times, be great gainers by a little taciturnity.

But, to show that some people talk much because they have much to say, as others possibly may because they have little, we have but to appeal to known facts, as recorded in history and biography. Facts, you know, are stubborn things. Montesquieu's famous saying, that "a man generally talks in proportion to the small degree of thought he possesses," is confronted by the well-authenticated statements, that King Solomon of old, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Bentley, Grotius, Burke, and Franklin, were great talkers.

It is, indeed, admitted, that we have had many wise men who were not at all characterized by sociability; such as Rousseau, Buffon, Dryden, Addison, Goldsmith, Washington, and Spurzheim. Of Epaminondas, it is said that "he talked only when it was necessary." It is even said of Apollonius Tyaneus, that he remained without speaking six years. Many examples of wisdom might be added, both from the ranks of loquacity and taciturnity. Enough, however, if I have shown that we have no certain and invariable rule in favor of the latter.

There are certainly many who talk a great deal and talk well, simply because they have a great deal to say which is really worth hearing. On the contrary, we have among us not a few who say but little,

because they have very little to say. The sum of the matter, as an English writer has well said, is this: "A thoughtful and talented person may converse much or little; and so may a fool." The difference between the two will appear, mainly, in the character of what they have to say.

For my own part, I must confess I like sociability or talkativeness, especially in the young of both sexes. The vocal organs are not a mere safety-valve, by means of which we are to set free, at stated times, a certain quantity of superfluous steam; they are much more. They are designed as a means of cheering, consoling, instructing, improving, and elevating others.

You will pardon me, I am quite sure, when I insist on sociability (which is but a more elegant name for loquacity) as an indispensable qualification for matrimony. I do not mean that I would have a young person fond of talking for the sake of talking, or for mere display; but to do good, and make the hearer better and happier.

O, how many of the hours and minutes of married life, which now seem to be monotonous, not to say tedious, for want of sociability, might be made the most profitable, if not the most pleasurable, of our lives, had this talent been early and properly cultivated! Young man, young woman, whoever thou art, value sociability, and endeavor to cultivate, improve, and even polish it! It is a gem whose lustre

will attract thee more and more as life moves onward toward life's end.

I do not, by any means, forget that the conversational powers of the young, especially of young women, are not unfrequently excited by the stimulus of unwholesome beverages, such as tea and coffee. But this is no objection to the cheerful conversation itself. Besides, it is the stimulus of numbers, in part,—the effect, I mean, of sympathy,—that quickens the tongue, brightens the eye, and elicits sociability, even at tea-parties. The devil himself should certainly have his due; but there is credit to be given, in these cases, in another direction. Besides, if it were not so, if the whole effect were produced by the unhealthy infusion, woman would be almost pardonable. Much of her loquacity, both here and elsewhere,—and much, even, that she says, which were better withheld,—may be fairly charged on those customs of society which shut her out, more than they do the other sex, from the company of friends beyond the pale of her own family circle, and tempt her to extra indulgence on extra occasions.

And yet, after all, the young of either sex have no need of extra stimulus to induce them to use their vocal organs to advantage; and it is to be hoped that those afternoon visits of mutual friendship which I have so freely recommended, may not be contaminated by them. It is an objection to evening parties and night assemblies, carried on beyond the pale and

without the influence of the family, that they are too often accompanied by the various fumes of excitement already alluded to, or by those which are worse, —which preclude the possibility of studying the human character unmasked, and as it really is. It would be a pity to have the same objection lie against select afternoon assemblies in the family, and under the parental eye and supervision.

Still, I must insist on sociability, as a highly important pre-requisite to marriage,— such marriage as is worthy of the name. Let the young seek it; and, if they seek it, I am quite sure they will find it. But let it not be sought “widowed of good sense,” and the other still more indispensable qualifications of which I have already spoken. If a person were every thing else I could desire, excepting a deficiency in this particular, I would not, simply on that account, set aside all other qualifications, and even despise the possessor. I would not, above all, adhere on the other hand to the old notion that the individual who talks most is the greatest fool, especially when his conversation is remarkable for its improving qualities.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HABIT OF OBSERVATION.

IN the long catalogue of the general qualifications of young men for usefulness and happiness, in this world, it is usual to set down, as one of the more important, a habit of observation. But it has not been usual, so far as I know, to regard our young women as having much need of this habit. For aught which has been said to the contrary, they may be considered as at full liberty to go through the world, should they choose to do so, with their eyes shut.

This, however, is wrong. Young women have eyes as well as the other sex, and are under the same natural and moral obligation to use them. Nay, more: their appropriate use would be as profitable to them as to the other sex, whether they are to remain single or to marry. But it usually happens that what qualifies for usefulness in single life, is doubly useful in matrimony.

If woman, in married life, is to be regarded, — as I shall, on every proper occasion, endeavor to maintain, — not a mere plaything, nor even a mere stationary thing of custom and convenience, but a

companion, and in most respects an equal, let her be trained to habits of correct and patient observation and investigation. No one can be what she ought to be, as a creature of everlasting progress, who has not this trait of character.

In searching for this trait, however, in the afternoon assemblies of the young, there will be a necessity, I shall be told, of encountering great and trying difficulties. Admitted; but what then? Can they not be overcome? And will not the effort be more than repaid? In any event, it will be less easy to detect it in the night revel or dance, where all is constrained and unnatural, or at least artificial; and where their whole aim, as the general rule is, to put on appearances,—to deceive and be deceived. If to be found anywhere, it is in the bosom of the family. It is as the result of an intimate and thorough acquaintance.

CHAPTER XII.

LOVE OF DOMESTIC LIFE.

How few there are among authors,—whether of prose or poetry,—who do not descant, more or less, on the virtues, and even the superior pleasures, of domestic life! How few there are with whom we meet, in the daily routine of duty or amusement,—patricians or plebeians,—who do not talk much about them! “There is no school”—we hear it everywhere said—“like the family school.” Here, in the retirement of its sequestered scenes, “polished friends and near relations mingle into bliss.”

And yet, after all, as a plain matter of fact, are we sincere? Do we, in reality, love domestic life? I cannot doubt that many really think they do; and I suppose it must be admitted that there are a few such instances on record. But if the good old saying, “By their fruits ye shall know them,” has a truthful foundation, and if we take the liberty to **examine** the fruits, in the case before us, shall we **not** conclude that the greater part of mankind **must** be mistaken?

When the man of business gets worn out with his

slavery to his daily round of business, he is very apt to say, O, how much my soul desires quiet,— the still quiet of domestic life! Such a man, in Boston, having failed in business, was asked by an intimate friend what he would set himself about now? “The first thing I mean to do,” said he, “is to become acquainted with my wife and children.” Now, this man was but one of many. How few know any thing about domestic life! And, what is still worse, how few care any thing about it!

You may find the female, even,— the mother and house-keeper, — who, though her house is her castle, cares as little about it as her liege lord! Were it not so, why does she not speak of her enjoyments there, when she has an opportunity? “Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.” Domestic life — its pleasures, its pains, even — is the last thing about which our gay and fashionable women would be willingly found holding conversation.

And as the old cock crows, the young ones learn. Or, to change the figure for a better one, as is the fountain, so is the stream. Can a fountain at the same time send forth sweet water and bitter? Can the mother, who hates the broom and duster as she would a dose of calomel, have a daughter estimate their value higher than she herself does? Such a thing, I grant, might happen once in an age. And I judge thus, because once or so, in an age, it has hap-

pened. It is, however, an exception — a strange one, too — to the general rule.

Woman, I grant, stays at home much more than man; very much more. His duties, as labor is now divided, necessarily lead him abroad. Woman's duties, for the most part, require that she should remain. Then, when still evening comes, and man might be at home much oftener than he now is, he is very apt to absent himself. The world of politics, just now, is very absorbing; and there is the post-office, the reading-room, and a place for lounging. There is the caucus, and it must be attended, so it is affirmed, by somebody; and, as a matter of course, you will generally find it *well* attended. Then, there is the lecture-room; and this is usually pretty well filled by men and boys. Women may attend at the lyceum lecture, I know; but sometimes it does not present attractions to the female world. Or, if it does, it is seldom that woman can leave her employments. Woman's work, you know, is never finished.

Then, there is the country store, — a most exceedingly convenient place for loungers of the coarser sort. For it is not the overgrown city alone, or the densely populated town or village, that entices men and boys away from domestic life; it is the sparsely settled country, almost as much as the densely inhabited places. Why, if I were a painter, a "genius" in painting, I could present you with a picture of ~~what~~ I have seen, in a remote corner of a township five or

six miles square, where you could hardly find a dozen dwellings on the most thickly populated square mile. "No wit, no genius, yet for once I'll try."

It was at the junction of several roads, on one or two of which, at certain times of the year, was considerable travelling. It was, moreover, four miles from the nearest villages in one or two directions, and five to the nearest in another. Partly to accommodate travellers on the public road, but much more to sell molasses, sugar, tobacco, and I fear sometimes rum, to his neighbors, — and, more than all, to accommodate himself with the profits, as he did not like hard work on the farm very well, — Mr. Perry kept a country store, exactly at this corner. He took, moreover, a country newspaper. As his paper was the vehicle of one party, however, and as there are usually two sides to a story, Mr. Upham, who lived near by, took another paper, which was the representative of the party opposite.

Now, as soon as gray twilight came on, and supper was ended, and the housekeeper had prepared a good blazing fire, as a decoy to those who should have added to the joys of her domestic life, away went Mr. Neighborly, her husband, to the store. The storekeeper, too, had prepared a liberal fire, and had withal borrowed Mr. Upham's newspaper, and caught a glimpse of the first and second line of the intelligence, so as to be able to lead the way in politics. All

things, indeed, were made ready as a substitute for domestic life and its joys.

Chairs there were, — a few of them, — but there were benches, too. Mr. Neighborly was soon joined by Mr. Flippan, Mr. Wisewell, and Mr. Combative. Others, too, one by one, came in, till chairs and benches both were pretty well filled. “Well, what’s the news to-day, Mr. Perry?” calls out Mr. Neighborly; having first seated himself in the largest chair and thrown his legs over a corner of the counter, — “what is the news?”

Mr. Perry commences with the details, interrupted by a hem or two; and Mr. Flippan relieves him by eking out the story. Mr. Wisewell interrupts them both, now and then, with his words of explanation. Mr. Combative, too, has his words of opposition to throw in; and, what is more, he can show you chapter and verse of authority from brother Upham’s paper, — Mr. Perry not having read far enough and penetrated deep enough. The discussion, at length, waxes warm, and the fire warmer still; till it is difficult to say whether the redness of eyes in the company proceeds from the causes of which Solomon speaks, or from the heat of the shining fireplace in the chimney.

The boys of the neighborhood, too, instead of staying at home, to make domestic life still more domestic by paring apples for their mothers, shelling corn for hommony, taking care of the baby, or instructing or

reading to their younger brothers and sisters, find their way to the store, and take their first lessons in politics and lounging. Some of them, already, at twelve years of age, know more (in their own wise estimation) about the history and present condition of their country than their grandfathers did. The school continues — I do not say it is a school of wisdom, but a school — till ten o'clock; when, one by one, they make good their retreat.

Now, this is no fancy affair, — far enough from that. It describes, in its essentials, more than one anti-domestic-life club. Our country is full of them. Some of them, it is true, are much worse in their character than the one I have described. There are instances where Solomon's reply to the question, *Who hath redness of eyes?* would not be inapplicable. The heat of the fire, the mental excitement, and perhaps the tobacco, may have had much to do with it; and yet there are those who, by means of a wink or a nod, get permission to go, for a few minutes, to the back part of the store, accompanied by the storekeeper, who carries a light, and, as we have good reason for believing, *furnishes heat beside.*

And there is one thing more, deserving of notice. Here and there, incorporated into these clubs, you will find a justice of the peace. He may be a very worthy man, in the main, and yet he has, step by step, become attached to these circles, till he can no more keep aloof from them than the bird can avoid the

throat of his charmer. He is lost, during the long evenings, — or, at least, quite out of his element, — unless he has his seat among these coarse, lazy men and boys. I have even seen the physician of the neighborhood at these places, cracking his jokes and apologizing for — nay, must I say it? sometimes sanctioning — low blackguard, if not sneers, and slanders, and profaneness. Finally, I have known professing Christians there. Is this to let our *light* shine, and to let it so shine that others, seeing our good works, may be led to glorify the Father who is in heaven? Would our Saviour, if on earth, spend his evenings at such places? Or would he find out and instruct, instead, some Lazarus, and Martha and Mary, at their own dwellings?

I confess I am shocked when I think of the ill effects which these associations are likely to have, wherever they are allowed, both directly and indirectly, on domestic life. The boys and young men, who have become early wedded to this foolish custom of passing away their evenings, not only *lose* their relish, — if, indeed, they ever had any, — for the society of their mothers and sisters at home, but *acquire* a relish for that society which is low and vulgar and vicious. I should be almost as willing to have a son of mine associated with a gang of regular swearers or slanderers, or thieves even, as with such a gang of loungers; for, in the former case, he might see the danger to which he was exposed, while, in

the latter, it is hidden for a time from the sight. Boys and young men tend to coarseness and vulgarity and vice quite fast enough, without separating them from the family during their leisure evenings.

If, now, instead of these coarse, semi-brutal associations, family and neighborly meetings could be had at the homes of the individuals, in which wives and daughters, no less than husbands and sons, could mingle, at least for two or three evenings of each week, the effect on domestic happiness would be less unfavorable. But this separation of families, during the only hours when the members of families can all well come together, is as bad as bad can be.

I might proceed to mention a thousand ways in which the disrelish of both sexes for the domestic fireside, and the plain, unvarnished, and unstimulating conversation of the domestic circle, is at once manifested and encouraged. In truth, if it were our determined and avowed purpose to train the young, of both sexes, to an utter disrelish for domestic life, in every form, I hardly know how we could very much improve upon our present modes and customs.

Females are not generally trained by their own mothers to a relish of domestic life. They regard home as tiresome, monotonous, and insipid. Much of their reading, at the present day, and in refined society not a little of the conversation, being high-seasoned, has the same tendency. It inculcates a standard of social life, which, in ninety-nine cases in

a hundred, they cannot expect to realize, were it even desirable. They sigh for something quite beyond them, — something which they cannot have; and which it is best, no doubt, they should not have.

Few people, I fear, are well aware of the utter disrelish which exists among the young of both sexes, but particularly among the female sex, for plain, every-day life. Once, daughters thought no place like home, and nobody like the inmates of that home. Now, home appears to be tiresome to them, and insipid; and friends themselves grow stale and monotonous. They almost sigh for a change, some of them, as they do of the fashion of their garments.

Enter one of our standard New England families; I mean, now, one of our best families. I will not, however, regard, as the standard for New England, a family which cannot do its own work, but employs one or two Irish laborers from day to day; but one of the few remaining families that dispense with foreign aid, and endeavor to do things in their own way. Enter, I say, in imagination at least, and make your comments.

You see the remnant of a mother, who has nearly worn herself out with the toils of rearing a family *not* to toil. At least, she has herself done almost every thing, and her children almost nothing. She wished to save their time for labor, amusement, study, and the toilet. And she still wishes to do so. And yet, you will hear her complain, at almost every step,

that her children have no health,—no constitution,—and even no tact or ability to help themselves!

This self-denying mother—for she thinks she leads a life of self-denial—is not self-denying, after all. She does every thing herself to *gratify* herself. This may seem a paradox; but hear me through. She does every thing herself, because she has been trained to do so, and it is a matter of mere habit; because she verily supposes nobody can do it as well as she herself; and because, if anybody must be seen in the habiliments of labor, she prefers to be that individual. For, though trained to labor, she begins to be ashamed of it. To be on a par with the ignorant foreigner, that labors for her next-door neighbor, is no trifling trial. Better, by far, she however supposes, that she should be degraded, than her daughters, or even her sons.

Now, I have represented this mother as wearing herself out for the sake of her children. And, really, it is a wonder she was not worn out long ago. For, in the first place, she inherited a constitution somewhat deteriorated. And, secondly, she has had twice as much work to do as she was able to do. Thirdly, she is much more nice than wise in her manner of doing her work. She wears herself out on the non-essentials, much more than on what is, in the nature of things, wholly indispensable.

But, then, to meet the hereditary tendency of this mother to feebleness, she was trained to hard work,

in a hard-working family. If, after doing the work, there was time for the toilet, the bathing-room, the morning dress, the morning call, the reading, the drawing, the school-room, or the evening party, why, very well; but if not, it could not be helped. The work — the business — must be done, at all hazards; the other things, if they could be. The rule then was, business or duty first; pleasure afterward. It was not then, as it too often is now, that the pleasures must be first regarded, so far as the children are concerned; while the parents — the mother especially — must find her pleasure, if she finds it at all, in doing up the work which was formerly done, in part, by the children.

It is not a little curious to observe, that, with only half the physical constitution, mothers and house-keepers had, a hundred years ago, they have twice the work allotted them, and little or no help, — I mean, from their own family. They had smaller houses; fewer spare and useless rooms to take care of; and, consequently, less furniture to take care of, and keep clean. Of course, I do not say they perform it all, for they do not. Those who are made, as it were, of iron, may perhaps hold out; but many break down, and call for foreign help; and thus labor gradually becomes undignified in the eyes of the young. Should they be willing to do that which has broken down their mother? Will they wish to work

alongside with foreigners? Will mothers allow them to do so, if they would?

It would aid a little, no doubt, in postponing the final fatal issues to which the preceding remarks refer, if the public felt any interest in those things. The interest of the female members of our families, in domestic concerns might, however, be greatly increased by familiar conversation on the subjects which pertain to the family, as they severally come before them. Thus, suppose the subject to be bread-making, and the daughters to have that dislike to it which is so common in society. Now, what daughter who has studied chemistry, and learned the theory of bread-making, would not be willing to cheer her mother at the bread-tray, for at least one-quarter of an hour, in explaining to her the curious laws of fermentation. She might explain the process of fermentation itself; she might say whether the bread, after fermentation, is more nutritive than before; and whether it is, or is not, more wholesome. Now, to one of these mothers who are "all work and no play," and yet are not wholly destitute of that curiosity which is deeply imbedded in our nature, some daughter who is all study, play, and dress, and without any working tendency, might become, for the time, an instructor. The various explanations and the various conversations which they would involve, would not fail to excite interest in both parties; and not less in the daughter-teacher than in the pupil-mother.

In the chapter on intellectual instruction I shall doubtless have occasion to show that mothers and daughters should work, shoulder to shoulder, in the department of housekeeping. What I say, here, is mainly intended as an expose of the common practice of despising the whole thing. For not only the daughters, who keep as far off as they can from what is called housework, but the mother, hates it, too, as she would poison, and only submits to the demands which it imposes because she must, and to save from the drudgery others whom she loves better than herself.

The truth is, we must have a deep, abiding, and radical reform in this whole matter. We must train our children to stay at home more than they now do, to help themselves more than they now do, and to help their brothers and sisters more. There is a principle getting ground in all our families, which must be at once and forever eradicated. I mean, that we live for immediate pleasure ; or, as it is called, in terms more genteel, for happiness. I know, indeed, that the truth of this principle, in the abstract, cannot be questioned. Whether it be said, in the language of the old Assembly of Divines' Catechism, that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and *enjoy him forever* ;" or, in the language of Dr. Paley, that "Virtue is doing good for the sake of everlasting happiness," or in that of an apostle, that all the saints of old who died in the faith had respect to the recompense of reward, or in respect of one much higher still, that for "the

joy set before him" he "endured the cross, despising the shame," etc., makes very little difference. Happiness, no doubt, is a lawful ultimate end; but to be continually asking, at every step we take, as some of our pretty books, and teachers, and parents have taught during the last generation: Will it make me happy? or, in other words, Will it give me pleasure? is ridiculous. The truth is, *that is right* which will, in its proper time and place, *make happy*. Practically, the great question with us should be, *Is it right? Consequences* we may leave for the present; *right* we may not.

Now, then, I say again, this great idea of making happy, or of being made happy, — I mean by an immediate process, — or of so doing every thing that it may bring us a harvest of immediate pleasure, I cannot help regarding as the great heresy of the times. It poisons wherever it influences. Pleasure is the god of all mankind, as mankind now are; and duty must stand at a distance. And as the young, ever eager for novelties, do not find something new at every step of the beaten path of domestic life, they are apt to dislike it. They turn away their thoughts to something that will *make happy*.

If they have been accustomed to walk, they see others riding, and think they should be more happy to ride. At first, perhaps, they sigh for horseback exercise; at least, if it is at all fashionable. Whether indulged in it or not, this afterwards becomes stale,

and they sigh for the carriage. And then, when fairly seated in a carriage, and happiness does not come fast enough, — even with the aid of whip and driver, — they sigh for a better charioteer, or for the railroad or steamer. Happiness, their “being’s end and aim,” is always somewhere else rather than within their immediate reach. Should we one day travel by means of the electro-magnetic telegraph, to what swifter or more fashionable conveyance will their eyes then be turned?

Even in the matter of dress, and of eating and drinking, happiness — pleasure — is always in the distance, as the seeker supposes. It does not come to *them*.

“Man never is, but always TO BE, blest.”

Generally it is supposed to take up its abode with wealth. They see something glittering, and take for granted *all* glitters. They are forever disposed to magnify and multiply what others possess, and to make comparisons unfavorable to themselves.

Now, while I would not aught extenuate, on the one hand, nor set aught down in malice, on the other, I must be permitted to enter my protest against this looking beyond ourselves, or our particular domestic circle, for happiness, even if happiness were to be our leading aim. If we cannot be happy at home, we can be happy nowhere. Let our young people, of both sexes, understand this; for, until they do under-

stand it, they lose one-half of the very happiness they seek.

It is said of Demosthenes, of old, that when asked what was the first qualification of an orator, he replied, "Action." When asked what was the second, he replied, "Action." And when asked what was the third, he still replied, "Action." To those who should make inquiries, with equal anxiety, about the means of attaining solid earthly happiness, I should be apt to make the perpetual reply, "Do right," "Do right," "Do right." And were another inquiry to follow, and to be pressed in a similar way, respecting the place where such a treasure could be found, I should say, — and persist in saying, — "In the retirement of domestic life."

Those who enjoy the opportunities and privileges I have recommended to their seniors and to them, of studying one another in the afternoon juvenile circle, will act the part of wisdom in fastening well on their minds the leading idea of this chapter. If those individuals to whom you find your heart already turned, or beginning to turn, have no love for domestic life; or, still worse, if their remarks and conduct, occasional or otherwise, show that, practically, they despise it; if their bowels yearn for what is above them, while all that is plain, solid, and substantial is, in their estimation, poor, tame, mean, and miserable; turn from them, not, of course, with disdain, but in pity. Let not your heart be ensnared

by your fancy. They are already miserable themselves; they will drag you, almost inevitably, into the same abyss,—and then woe, woe, woe! We have heard of woe eternal: this is, at least, near of kin to it.

The discovery of this trait of character is not difficult. First, from its rarity. Secondly, in the usual way. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” I must once more say, no person of tolerable observation and good sense can be in the society of a young man or young woman, with whom they are at all intimate, for so much as a single half-hour,—especially when all is free and unrestrained, as everything would and should be in the afternoon juvenile social circle,—without being able to detect the love of domestic life, if it has an existence. The worst fear is that it may not be present. There are many circles, both of the old and the young, from which it is inevitably and forever excluded. The thought is a sad one, and it augurs ill for humanity; but it must be had, and we must meet the consequences.

CHAPTER XIII

LOVE OF CHILDREN.

WHAT I have to say under this head might perhaps have been included in the preceding chapter, since children are for the most part an important item of the domestic circle, and a very natural and indispensable element of domestic life. But the rage is usually for short articles, as it is for short sermons and short speeches; and I prefer, on the whole, to treat the subject separately.

Had the question been agitated when I was young, whether the young themselves,—or even the youthful parent,—ever disliked children, I should certainly have smiled. I could as easily have conceived of a young man or young woman that did not love apples, or cherries, or oranges, or sugar, as of one that did not love children. And, in the observations of later life, such a discovery always, at the first, elicits surprise. I have seen persons who did not like fruit,—descended though they claimed to be from Eve,—and I have seen about as many who had a natural, though unaccountable, hatred of children. I have found it in both sexes; though most frequently, as I

am glad to say, for the honor of human nature, in our own.

Some may disbelieve this statement, so far as females are concerned. A woman who hates the young, they will say, must be a monster. Yes; she must be so. But we have the testimony of women themselves on this point; and will we discredit their own statements? We have more than this, even; we have the testimony of *conduct that implies this*; and actions, you know, are said to speak louder than words. Why, there is an Irish family only a mile from my own house, consisting of a husband and three little children, which was deserted by the mother a year or two since; and I cannot learn that she has even made any anxious inquiries about the children, to this very day.

This unnatural feeling, however, is oftener found — so I believe — in what is called high life, than in the other social extreme. To many fashionable females, children seem an incumbrance. Do such females love children? They are a source of confinement, I know. It is true, these fashionable mothers have servants; but the children are in the way, notwithstanding. They must be borne, if they are not actually nursed. There are some things, in this world, which cannot be wholly shuffled off.

Some, I know, have thought it a great weakness in boys to be fond of children. Above all, that extreme or excess of the law of instinct which leads

them to be fond of *pets*, they think quite degrading. But I cannot so regard it. On the contrary, I deem it favorable. It is, at least, much better than that devotion to self which makes us overlook children as things of no consequence; and which is quite characteristic of the present age and of this country.

But, however it may be with regard to the love of *pets*, I cannot help regarding it as signally honorable, in a boy, to love children. It is no mark of effeminacy or of weakness. The great and the good have always manifested a kind and tender regard for the young. Look through the world's history, all the way from the creation downward, and you will find it so. At least, it will be found so with as few exceptions as to any general rule. And, among these, you will not find our Saviour, or Paul.

If we can conceive of any great man as being so intent on what he might be tempted to regard as larger business, that it left him no time — positively not a moment — for manifesting an interest in little children, it is the apostle Paul. This wonderful man, after recounting his labors and toils and sufferings, — enough to crush any ordinary man, — adds to the list by saying: “Besides that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” And yet, how often, in his writings and labors, he remembers little children! In which of his interviews with his friends, as he journeys from place to place, are they forgotten?

Is it when he speaks the work of God, not only to the jailor at Philippi, but to all that are in his house? Is it when, kneeling on the seashore with the converted Tyrians, the children and their mothers join in the devotions? Is it when he reminds the Corinthian converts of the duty of laying up for their children? Is it, finally, when he says to the Colossians, "Children, obey your parents in all things;" and to the Ephesians, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord"?

I do not like very long quotations, but the following extracts from a work I have before me are so apropos to my present purpose, that I am unwilling to deny myself the pleasure of their insertion:

"Old people would find great advantage in associating rather with the young than with those of their own age. The conversation of young people dissipates their gloom and communicates a cheerfulness, — and something else, perhaps, which we do not understand, — of great consequence to the health and the prolongation of life. There is a universal principle of imitation among mankind, which disposes them to catch instantaneously, and without being conscious of it, the resemblance of any action or character that presents itself. We have numberless examples of this, in the similitude of character and manners induced by people being much together. We will not attempt to explain the nature of this mental infection, but it is a fact well established that such a thing

exists, and that there is such a thing in nature as a healthy sympathy, as well as a morbid infection.

“An old man, who enters into this philosophy, is far enough from envying or proving a check on the innocent pleasures of young people, and particularly of his own children. On the contrary, he attends with delight to the gradual opening of the imagination and the dawn of reason. He enters, by a secret sort of sympathy, into their guiltless joys, that revive in his memory the tender images of his youth which, as Mr. Addison observes, by length of time have contracted a softness inexpressibly agreeable; and thus the evening of life is protracted to a happy, honored and unenvied old age.”

But this green old age, as it has not unaptly been called, we shall rarely have among us till it has been preceded by childhood and youth of the right stamp. The young must be trained to the love of the young. Let me present a single illustration.

“A RAILROAD INCIDENT.

“It was late. The lamps of the car burned dimly. In one seat were a ‘happy couple,’ who rejoiced in a carpet-bag, two hand-boxes, an umbrella, a basket, a brown paper parcel, and a ‘sleeping cherub.’ Suddenly a cherub — a girl of some three years’ experience in this strange world — awoke from one of those long, undisturbed slumbers that are among the inalienable prerogatives of blameless childhood, and climbed

up so as to stand and look over the back of the seat. Two care-worn, travel-weary, and half-awake men sat directly in front of the innocent little creature. They looked as if they had been on board of railway cars for a month, and had journeyed from the regions around sunset. The great, curious eyes of the child fell upon them. She scanned carefully the faces of each, and one would have deemed her to be an infantile physiognomist. Presently one of them looked at her. It was evident that she liked him, of the two, and had about made up her mind to speak to him; for instantly her little voice was heard, as she piped out the query :

“ ‘Does you love little girls?’ ”

“The man looked at her a moment rather gruffly, and then replied,

“ ‘No, I don’t!’ ”

“A shade of unutterable disappointment and surprise was instantly daguerreotyped upon the sweet and blooming countenance of the child, but passed away when she replied,

“ ‘Yes, you do!’ ”

“The man roused himself and took another look. He was evidently puzzled and interested, and he said :

“ ‘How do you know?’ ”

“And she replied :

“ ‘ ‘Cause you look as if you did.’ ”

“This thawed him out some, and he said :

“ ‘I have got a little girl at home.’ ”

"The little questioner now felt that she was on the 'right track,' and after a look that showed this intelligence presented a new and unexpected view of the affair, renewed the conversation earnestly, and the following colloquy ensued:

"Does you love your little girl?"

"Yes."

"Is she a real good little girl?"

"Sometimes she is."

"Is she naughty sometimes?"

"Yes."

"Does she go down in the kitchen when she had n't ought to?"

"Yes, sometimes."

"Do you whip your little girl when she is naughty?"

"Sometimes."

"Does she cry when you talk to her and tell her she is naughty?"

"Yes."

"Then do you whip her?"

"Sometimes."

"When she says she is sorry, do you whip her then?"

"No, never."

"The little creature's eyes danced and sparkled at this, and drawing conclusions, no doubt from her own experience, she exclaimed:

"I's real glad, I is!"

"Then looking at the other man, who had refused to answer the question she had put to him, she said to her newly-made friend with a look of wonder:

" 'That man won't speak to me. Does he love little girls?'

"That man had a heart somewhere, and he thawed out. Rousing himself, he extended his brawny hand and said :

" 'How do you do, sissy?'

" 'And the little creature, not altogether at her ease, replied:

" 'I's pretty well ; how is you?'

"By this time all within hearing of the colloquy were moved to tears,—the eyes of the parents of the little prattler were full to overflowing,—and those who were nearest heard one of the men she had questioned say to the other :

" 'She's a little witch.'

"And so she was. Her blooming beauty and her infantile artlessness were powerful enough to break through the roughness, the weariness, the reserve, and the indifference of these travel-worn men of the world, and to melt them to tears."

If any of my readers aspire to matrimony, and have not the love of infancy and childhood, I will not, indeed, say to them, Go back to infancy and unlearn one of the greatest practical errors of your lives ; but I will say, do not pass another day of life without

striving to atone for parental neglect, by doing what it is not wholly too late to attempt. Man, even at twenty or twenty-five, — and woman too, — is almost omnipotent in power in the matter of changing habits and modes of life, notwithstanding the more general belief to the contrary. But, if powerful at twenty or twenty-five, he is much more so at fifteen.

“It is a most unfortunate circumstance,” says the author of the “Young Wife,” “that fashion, custom, and business have fixed such a great gulf between children and adults; and especially between children and the aged. Children live in the future, and naturally — I must say instinctively — delight in hearing the conversation and stories of those who are older. And yet, the latter, who live in the past, and delight as much in relating what they have seen and heard as the young do in hearing it, seem, for the most part, to stand quite aloof from them, and even to bury the fund of instruction in the grave of their decaying faculties. Why is the gulf of separation kept up, to the great loss of all parties and of the world? Let us be grateful to Heaven that attempts are beginning to be made to pass it, the results of which cannot be otherwise than successful and happy.

“The love of juvenile character here recommended is greatly conducive to intellectual improvement. Those who associate much with children seem to make far greater mental progress than persons in other circumstances. ‘Teaching we learn, and giving

we retain;’ and it is scarcely possible to be much with the young, without falling into the habit of instructing them. And this habit of hearing and answering infantile and juvenile questions is highly favorable to the development of our own minds. It is so, even when all we do for them is in the way of story-telling. The single habit of telling stories to the young, — especially of striving to excel in it, — with a view to gain their attention, and please and interest them, is of great value.”

One reason for commending to my readers the custom of bringing the young together in family groups or circles, is to prevent or break up the gulf of separation above alluded to, between parents and children, and the old and the young generally. And such, among others, must be its certain effects, whenever and wherever the custom is established and pursued with proper caution.

As I have shown in chapter XII., the custom of absenting ourselves from home during the long evenings of a considerable part of the year, and of tempting away our sons, is one of the most unfortunate things for the family which could happen. How many thousands of young men lose all their natural love of the young, if they ever had any, in this very way! And how many, too, of those who remain at home — of the other sex — are less fond of the young in after life than if the family had been together more!

How surprising the difference, in this respect, be-

tween our own country and the interior of some portions of middle and southern Europe! Of course, I do not deny that there are loungers there, and even drunkards. And yet, in some parts, you will find the families together from daybreak till the hour of rest. You will even find them at work together in the field, — both sexes, — from morning to evening, till they are too much fatigued to be abroad. But this latter remark, it is true, is not so applicable to the long as to the short evenings of the year.

Would that I could be instrumental, by these remarks, in persuading some reader to love the young better than he now does, whether he aims at being, himself, at the head of a family or not. It is said, in the book of inspiration, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

CHAPTER XIV.

LOVE OF PROGRESS.

THE great end of Christianity itself, says Dr. Channing, is to make mankind wiser and better. But, if this were saying too much, it certainly is not too much to say, that he who has not caught the love of improvement or progress is not worthy the name of Christian, — at least, in the nineteenth century.

Nor is it going at all out of the way, when I affirm it to be an indispensable qualification in both sexes, for marriage. What is any condition of life without it? What, above all, would married life be? If people wish to be brutes, and hold the prerogatives of brutes, why, let them be so; but if they intend to come to the stature of perfect men and women and children, let them cultivate the love of progress. Our capacity for intellectual elevation is thus alluded to •by Dr. Young, in his “Night Thoughts”:

“Brutes soon their zenith reach: their little all
Flows in at once; in ages they no more
Could know, or do, or covet or enjoy.
Were man to live coeval with the sun,
The patriarch pupil would be learning still;
Yet, dying, leave his lesson half unlearn’t.”

(187)

Now, this capacity for progress implies obligation. If God has made us capable of growing wiser indefinitely, we are *bound* to grow wiser indefinitely. But we are as capable of growing better forever, as wiser; and here, too, we are advanced beyond the brutes, and laid under a corresponding increase of obligation. And so, in no stinted degree, is it with regard to capacity and obligation to make physical advances. But this last we shall better understand when we come to the chapter on Health.

This obligation, in all the circumstances of human life, to be *progressive*, will be acknowledged, as I have no doubt, by nearly every individual in the world. I should be surprised if one in a million, who is capable of understanding it, should refuse to yield his assent to it. And yet, is there one in a million who governs himself according to such a belief? I would gladly hope the proportion is greater than this; but it is certainly very small.

Life, as a general thing, with young and old, seems to be without end or aim. We rise in the morning, or at least somewhat before the sun reaches the meridian,—in general, when we happen to get ready, unless impelled by some extraneous force or other. And, having risen to life and activity, we begin to think and act in one way or another. It will not do for us to be dolts. As to the *manner* of acting and thinking, this is chiefly at haphazard, — usually as we have thought before, in circumstances nearly similar;

and, except when our own sphere of "helter-skelter" is infringed upon by others, we continue to think as we happen to, during the whole day, till night comes. Then, we only sleep a little more soundly, and dream a little better, than we have done during the day time; for what is such an existence but dreaming,—the whole of it?

Notwithstanding our high capacities and corresponding obligations, mankind in general, in their ordinary uneducated state, and sometimes after we have been driven through the schools, are little better than mere automatons or machines, that, being wound up, go by the force of weights and pullies till they are run down again. The great leading difference in the two cases is, that the pure machine is always the same. It runs down, each day, with a similar clatter. Whereas the human machine clatters differently each day, according to the different impressions made on it by other minds as mechanical as itself.

Horace Mann, in selecting from a crowd of strangers a man whom he thought suitable for an arbiter between himself and his neighbor, in a matter which concerned the valuation of a little real estate, said, "I will take that man; he appears to know what he is thinking about." The great mass of mankind—I repeat—not only do not know what they are thinking about, but do not appear to care. And, what is still worse, they evidently have no misgivings or compunctions of conscience on account of their thoughtlessness.

It seems, indeed, not a little strange that a creature made in the image of God himself, and placed but a little lower in the scale of being than angels, and whose glory should be in thinking to an end, should never, as a general rule, for one hour of the whole twenty-four, know what he is thinking about, or even know whether he thinks at all. Strange — nay, passing strange, — that he should be, for a whole life-time, a mere ship at sea, without compass, anchor, or helm, driven about whithersoever the wind or the storm chances to drive him !

The Pythagoreans had a rule, — a sort of sacred rule, we are told, — which, were it obeyed by all mankind, and had it always been so, would have greatly altered the condition of the human family from what we now see it to be. Had every son and daughter of Adam and Eve, who was not a drivelling idiot, been accustomed to run thrice over, every night, the thoughts, words, and actions of the preceding day, it is not easy, in the present dilapidated state of humanity, to conjecture what might have been the present degree of general human advancement.

It was my custom, once, while a public school-teacher, to require my pupils, every morning, at the beginning of the daily exercises, to devote five minutes to the duty of recalling, by aid of reflection and memory, the studies, exercises, and discipline of the preceding day. This was a faint approximation to what Pythagoras had in view ; and to what is indi-

cated in the whole life and teachings of Him who was much greater and better than Pythagoras.

Men have been known who had the power of recalling to memory, at pleasure, every act, however trifling, of their whole active lives. I have myself been acquainted with *one* such individual. Though he was a man of a very extensive business, he never made a written record of any thing during his whole life, and probably never forgot any thing. It certainly was never made to appear that his memory so much as once failed him. For the satisfaction of others, he ought, undoubtedly, to have kept written accounts; but, for himself, it was never necessary.

Yet there is no reason for believing that this man had any faculty or faculties different from those of other men. He simply attended to his own thoughts and actions, and remembered them. He not only knew what he was thinking about, but he knew what he *had thought* about. And what man has done in this respect, as well as in many others, man may do. Or, if there are exceptions, they are few, and serve but to confirm and strengthen the general rule.

Now, I greatly desire to see the day—or, if I cannot live to see it, I wish to have somebody live to see so golden a period—when every child will be trained, from the very first, to consider every day as a little life, and to govern himself accordingly. We have no spare or leisure days—no play-days—no holidays—

no vacations. From the moment we begin to be conscious of right and wrong,—no matter whether we are one year, two years, or ten years old,—from that very moment we should rise in the morning with all that intense interest which we should feel if it were the very first day of our existence, and God in his Providence had permitted us to open our eyes, for the first time, on the fair face of nature, his own handiwork. We should feel that our sleep has been a species of death, and that our waking again is a species of resurrection. And, as God has raised us from the death of sleep to a new life,—not, indeed, by means of the archangel's trump, but by the still small voice of the sun's rays, chanticleer's shrill clarion, the returning music of the birds, and the hum of approaching business,—let us rise, rejoicing in the gift, and determining that, whatever others may do, we will, with almost angel swiftness, run—yea, fly—through the region which God has assigned us, spreading, in our way, the everlasting gospel. For it is not the stated proclamation of the truth from the sacred desk alone, whose office it is to spread the gospel of the Son of God. Every man, woman, and child, who lives, and moves, and breathes, should feel, just as truly as do God's special ministers, "Woe is me, if I preach not!"

But let not the reader misunderstand me. I do not mean to say, that we should pass through life as if our whole existence were but a funeral scene, and

as if every thing were hung with black. Nor do I mean that we should talk or think of nothing but Scripture doctrines and Christian duties, without having, in any sense whatever, so much as a single holiday or a moment's amusement. What I mean is just this. Whether we play or labor, learn or teach others; whether we preach, or practice medicine, or make shoes and boots, or pins, for a livelihood, our great aim should be—and, as Christians, it must be—to do these things in such a manner that, on the whole, they may be a means, direct or indirect, of spreading the gospel. We must do it in such a manner, that, while we are doing it, we may have a full assurance that in no other known way, for the time being, can we so well fulfil the command of Christ, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," as in the particular way we are now acting.

Thus, suppose a young man is inclined to skate on the ice. Now, the youth whose employment is that of a student seldom has exercise enough out of school to keep him in the full tide of physical growth and improvement, and he really needs extra amusement. His object is to fit himself, at this early age, for future usefulness in the world; and this is but his appointed way, for the time, to spread the gospel. In other words, he must so attend to his studies and duties as to be fitting himself, in the best possible manner, while he is passing on, so to employ himself as shall

tend, more than any course of conduct which is in his power, to advance the kingdom of Christ. But, then, if he needs, in order to secure the best of health, and make at the same time the most healthy progress in his studies, such exercise (as I have already said, may happen), it is a very proper inquiry whether it may be not only right, but a duty, to spend an hour in skating. And if, after revolving the matter in his mind as well as he can, for a few moments, he should conclude it to be right for him to do thus, and if his judgment in the premises is correct, then, according to the views I entertain on this subject, he is just as truly spreading the gospel by his skating, as if he were lifting up his voice with Paul in the ancient Athens, or with Dr. King in the modern one. He is not, strictly speaking, enjoying a season of leisure, or a holiday season, or an amusement merely; for when mankind speak of amusement, and holidays, and vacations, they mean, in general, that which has nothing to do with the business of life, but is, for the time, an escape from it. Whereas, in the view I take of the matter, it is a part of the duty of life, — or a part of the work of preaching the gospel, — as much as any thing else. Indeed, I do not see how an enlightened Christian can entertain any other views than these, on this great subject.

But to bring you a step nearer to my main point. If these things are so; if the great business of each individual, whatever may be the manner in which he

employs himself from morning to night, and whatever may be his age or circumstances, is to spread the gospel of Christ, then it is his duty to perfect himself in this blessed work by spending each day in a better manner than the day which preceded it. And this should not be done grudgingly, but cheerfully and joyously; for God loves a cheerful giver.

My leading object, in writing this chapter, is to urge it on every young person who reads it, to take the view of life's duty and the law of progress which I have here indicated. Each day is a life in miniature; each night is a miniature death. Each morning that we wake is, as it were, a resurrection to a new life. And each successive resurrection to a new life increases our power, as it does our obligation, to advance the cause of truth, or to make, in such ways as we may be able, the best preparation for advancing that cause which it is possible for us to make.

Is there one thinking person in a hundred who will object to the views I have thus developed? And yet, is there one in a hundred who governs himself as if his belief accorded with my own? Where, in truth, is the individual to be found who, in the review of each day at evening, having weighed himself, as it were, in the balance of the sanctuary, and found himself wanting, resolves, in deepest penitence on account of his delinquency, that, if raised to the new life of another day, he will spend it better than he ever has done a day before; and who actually rises, the next morning,

renews his resolution, confirms his vows, and perseveres, through the day, in season and out of season, through good report and through evil, in struggling to do better and become wiser than before?

Yet every one of our young people ought, as Christians of the nineteenth century, to do all which is here contemplated, and much more. They are not otherwise fit for Christian matrimony. They are not ready for letting their light shine, in the way in which, as members of a family, and especially as the heads of it, they are to honor God. Nor will God, in his Providence, much longer allow them to have a place in his church. He will pluck them up as a branch that is withered.

Such a course of duty as I have indicated in this chapter — such a life of effort at progress — must not only become common, and in the best days of earth's history, universal, but we must love to have it so. We must not only be creatures of progress, — every day growing wiser and better, — but we must love to make progress. We must not only love progress, but pursue it; and we must pursue it, perseveringly, to the last day and hour of life.

Does any one suppose that the love of progress, or the desire for improvement, ends with this life? Has it nothing to do with that world to which we are all rapidly hastening? Does not each angel soar a little higher, and perform a little better each successive errand, as he flies through the midst of the celestial

world, spreading — angel-like — the everlasting gospel? And are we, in due time, to become angels, too, and not soar the better and fly the swifter for having plumed our wings for the purpose here below?

One object of the great Jehovah, in his first decree with respect to humanity, was this work of human progress. It was this in which Eve was to be a helpmeet to her senior. But the work was to be reciprocal, no doubt. Adam was to aid his wife in the great work, as well as she him. And thus it was intended to be till the world's end, — till the angel that stands upon the sea and upon the earth shall lift up his hand, and swear by Him that liveth forever and ever that there shall be time no longer.

In all your intercourse, then, with your youthful companions for the study of character, especially with reference to married life, make it a prominent point to ascertain whether your companions have imbibed the love of progress. It will show itself, if it exist, and this at every step. In conversation, in conduct, in word, and in look, it will leak out. The difference is world-wide — I might say heaven-wide — between the conduct of the progressive and the individual who is only wound up every day, to run down every night, with precisely the same clatter with that of the day previous.

Remember, finally, that heaven itself is *not* heaven *without the love of progress*. Men may talk about heaven as much as they please; but no beings inhabit

the celestial city, to behold its pearly gates or walk its golden streets, but such as have been habituated, by a longer or shorter period of discipline, to the great work of laboring, every successive day, to become wiser and better.

Is it asked, what this last thought has to do with a work on courtship and marriage, since we are expressly told that in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage? I reply, that, though there are no new marriage contracts entered into in the next world, we are not told, so far as I know, that attachments which are already formed in worlds of trial, like this, are to pass away in the world of award. And I can conceive of no such change of character, at death, as shall make me indifferent five minutes afterward to those whom I have loved for fifty years with the same intensity with which I have loved my own life.

I foresee an objection to this, arising from the idea which has so long pervaded most of our minds, that marriage is chiefly a physical concern. It will be said; "But marriage has so much to do with physical character that we can hardly speak of its effects of any sort in a world of mere spirits." Yet herein is a mistake. We are not to be mere spirits in the next world. There are *bodies* spiritual, as well as bodies celestial; and we do not know that the change made by death, even in the organization of the body, is as great as many suppose. The more pure, here below, are less influenced in their attachments, whether conjugal or

any other, by the physical vehicle than those who are less so ; and it is probable that the sensorial tendencies, so to call them, are more striking, ay, and more lasting too, on some who enter the spirit-world than on others. And hence it may be true that marriage is less broken up by death in some than in others ; and in all, much less than has generally been supposed.

CHAPTER XV.

SELF-RELIANCE.

ONE of the worst results of our modern defective and perverted system of female education, is, an undue reliance on the other sex. I do not, of course, deny that we are more or less dependent on each other; nor that, by the constitution of things, the female may be more dependent on the male than the latter on the female. And yet, I have not a doubt that the common notions concerning female dependence are greatly at variance with the truth.

In our modern attempts to introduce a greater equality of the sexes, as regards their rights, it is far enough from being necessary that woman should undertake to perform those offices or duties for which her physical frame, either by inheritance or acquired habit, has become unfitted. And yet, I cannot help honoring the individual, who, in the consciousness of her rights, goes boldly forward and performs those duties, whenever and wherever circumstances render it necessary.

One of the most frequent — not to say most contemptible — mistakes of modern education, is, that of

training young women to think they must, everywhere, have special attention paid them simply *because* they are young women. It is a law of Christianity — and ought to be a law of Christian politeness — for each to “esteem others better than himself”; and to act accordingly. But it is no law of Christian politeness that compels either a young man or an old one to perform those little offices on behalf of the other sex which only tend to render him more despicable, both to them and to himself, than before. For we may be assured that every female who is worthy of the name, detests as much our mock gallantry as she does our hypocrisy.

Woman should be trained to perform every thing for herself, as far as possible, provided her self-reliance does not interfere with that of others. There should, in fact, be a perpetual strife between brothers and sisters of the same family which shall do most, and thus most relieve others. But is not the family — the smaller family, in which we are born — a mere stepping-stone to, the great family, society at large? And are we to form one habit or one set of habits for the former, and another for the latter? Rather, are we required to form a habit in the family, which is to be unlearned as soon as we go out into society? For my own part, I regard that which is proper and polite in the family to be proper and polite in the world at large. There are not two codes of law, — whether the law of fashion, or etiquette, or any other,

—one for the home of childhood and youth, and another for that of maturer years.

I wish this great principle were better understood. I wish parents would take more pains to establish in their families the true Christian self-reliance of which I am speaking; and then it would not be necessary for teachers, and preachers, and moralists to perform that which does not, of right, devolve on them. Every daughter, no less than every member of a Christian family, should be impelled, by a deep internal desire and determination, to do all in her power, and in fact—were it practicable—to do every thing which there is to be done. Such, I say, should be the impulse. But the head should direct the blind impulse of the heart, and direct to a course which will permit others to do a part, especially that which the wiser head tells her belongs more properly to the other sex. The heart is not to be wholly relied on. It may be warmer than the head; but it is destitute of eyes, ears, and brains.

It may, perhaps, be said that if one person in a family, and only one,—whether it be the smaller, instinctive circle, or the larger family of the world,—has this spirit, she may be a great sufferer by it. I grant it. But she suffers in a good cause. Her example will have its influence on somebody, here or hereafter. Indeed, its influence would, to some extent, be immediate, unless in the case of parents who are very ignorant, or very partial or weak. What parent

of any sense or worth would permit a good child long to do every thing and bear every burden of the family, till it became a sacrifice? Besides, there are very few children who would not be moved, by the effect of example, to deeds of the same kind, were it only in the way of imitation. If the Scripture injunction, "Overcome evil with good," is founded in wisdom, then it is obvious that evil can be met and overcome in this manner. And if it can be thus overcome anywhere, it can be everywhere; especially in a family of loving brothers and sisters.

Will it not be a most auspicious period in the history of fallen humanity, when every individual of our race — the female no less than the male, and the youthful female no less than the old one — shall feel a constant impulse, not only to do every thing for themselves, but for everybody else? What a contrast will it afford to the present state of things, in which few will do any thing beyond the family precincts, — hardly even there, — if they can shift it to the shoulders of somebody else! What a change will it present in the character of daughters!

In searching for a companion for life, it will not be very difficult to identify this trait of character, if it really exists. The greatest difficulty will be to find it. You may need two hours of active observation for this purpose. But, mark my words, better to seek two years than miss of finding it. Better to be wedded to a mist, or even to a spider's web, than to an individual, male or female, who has no self-reliance.

CHAPTER XVI.

INDEPENDENCE.

INDEPENDENCE might be made to include self-reliance; but I have used the term here to designate a species of mental self-reliance which deserves a more elevated name. An individual may be self-relying as regards his outward conduct, while in his opinions he is dependent on the very breath of the public sentiment, and can hardly move or speak without seeming to inquire, How will it please others? or, What will people say about it?

We are somewhat accustomed to look upon him who cannot form his own opinions or make his own movements in the world of business, politics, or religion, without asking, at every step, how his course is likely to please others, with a degree of contempt. Why, then, should not the same want of independence, in the smaller matters of life, be contemptible also? It has even more to do with our real happiness or unhappiness than the other.

It has not unfrequently been thought and affirmed that woman is less independent, in opinion and in conduct, than man. Whether this is true or not, one

thing is certain, — that, so powerful is her influence in the formation of human character, that she ought not to be so. As a mother and housekeeper, among her children and dependents, her influence is as unbounded as it is irresistible. It is, hence, exceedingly desirable that she should be mentally independent, especially if her husband should chance to be of the opposite character.

But independence, — true, manly, rational independence, — coupled with that self-reliance of which I have spoken briefly in the preceding chapter, is a gem anywhere. It would be so in despotic governments, and even under the yoke of slavery. Were I a petty tyrant or slaveholder, I should value highly this trait of character, in man or woman, and should do nothing, even as a matter of pecuniary policy, to curb or repress it. I should not, I mean to say, with my present views on the subject.

The distinguished geologist, M'Clure, after a long life of observation, came to the strange conclusion that orphans make their way best in the world. Now, that orphans are not so often spoiled by indulgence as those children who have parents, must be admitted ; but is it certain that they are more truly independent than other children ? I have not found it so, at least uniformly. Were it truly so, would it not furnish an argument in favor of celibacy, of greater power than any which has ever yet been advanced ?

It may, indeed, be true that, if the great business of

human life were to *take care of Number One*, these orphans might be the best citizens. It is by no means sure that the orphan may not succeed best in fortune-hunting, office-seeking, and the like. But, as members of society, — as benevolent rather than selfish beings, — I am quite sure that those who are trained in the family, by their own parents, are the most successful in life, after all. Nor do I find them less independent, in the best sense of the term; but, in truth, more so.

But is not woman more dependent than man, at least, in the married state? I shall doubtless be asked. For, otherwise, what means the talk we have had for ages, at least till very recently, about a due submission of the wife to the husband? I cannot see that a due submission to the husband — I mean a reasonable one — takes away aught, by necessity, from the wife's independence. Why should it? And, I repeat the inquiry, — as a matter of plain fact, does it?

You can have little hope of reformation in the family, when the wife — as too commonly happens — lacks the spirit of independence. It is bad enough for the husband to be at the mercy of others' opinions; to be able to go forward in nothing without anxiously desiring to know the opinions of others, and cautiously asking, at every step: What will they say? or, How will it look? or, I think so or so, don't you? or, I do not like it, do you? — but to have a wife thus inclined is much worse.

There is such a thing as combining the most perfect independence of opinion with a proper deference to the opinions of others. There need be no clashing. Benevolence inclines to this; but it sometimes needs to summon other qualities to its aid. Some of these — such as decision and piety — will be mentioned hereafter.

CHAPTER XVII.

MUTUAL CONCESSION AND FORBEARANCE.

IN passing the thronged streets of our larger cities, I have more than once seen two carriages, in a narrow passage only just wide enough for one, standing opposed to each other, surrounded by a crowd of gaping, indolent men and boys, and the drivers looking at each other in stern silence. They had accidentally met in this narrow passage, and, as both claimed the right of passing first, they were both unwilling to recede; and hence were both prevented from pursuing their journey, and performing their duty and business.

Now, I never took pains to join the crowd, in such a case, and await the final issue. It is obvious, however, that one of three things must take place. The opposing parties must continue to stand there; or one of them must yield up what he calls his rights; or there must be a quarrel. And, even if they quarreled, mutual concession would, in all probability, still be needed, even though it were extorted by force or fear.

Indeed, it cannot otherwise than often happen, in

the crowded town or city, if not elsewhere, that we must either give up a portion of what we deem our rights, or find ourselves involved in difficulty. Many, I know, talk about standing their ground and maintaining their rights inviolate. But this does not come to much. Somebody is obliged to yield, after all. Individuals and nations, after they get tired of standing and waiting for their opponents to recede, and proceed to quarreling, end about where they began. They might as well recede or back out before the quarrel as afterward, — nay, in truth, far better.

We may, indeed, have our plans and aims; and should have. In passing along Broadway in New York, or Washington street in Boston, I may consider myself as entitled to a passage, — even a direct or straight one. But how seldom it happens that I can proceed ten rods, before somebody's rights, either real or supposed, require that I should vary a little from a straight line. Now I must turn a step this way; now that. For, if I do not turn, I may give offence, or be jostled out of the path, or thrown quite off the sidewalk. Now, what is wisdom, but to make concession to my neighbor, — yield a little of what seems to be my right of the sidewalk? Or, suppose I am a little jostled, shall I, in the full exercise of my republicanism, either fly into a passion about it, or be sullen or sour?

It should be somewhat so in matrimonial life, — indeed, in any sort of life, — in a world whose in-

habitants are not made to be alone. In worlds—if there be any such—in which God has placed but a single inhabitant, there can be no opposing each other in narrow defiles, and no jostling or narrow sidewalks, and consequently no necessity for concession or forbearance. But ours is a very different thing. No one can be certain, for an hour, that his path will not be crossed, or that he shall not be jostled. And who is he that will never yield his rights, or any part of them, for the sake of others? He may be Cain, Cæsar, or Napoleon; he cannot be Joseph, Daniel, John, or Paul.

Yet, what is more common than for husbands and wives to be exceedingly tenacious of their rights? They are convinced a thing ought to be so or so; and are exceedingly reluctant to make any concessions which shall detract at all from their own infallibility. The consequences at first—to themselves, at least—may not be serious. Gradually, however, the conflict of opinion becomes more and more frequent, as well as more and more unpleasant to themselves. The more frequent these conflicts, the more frequent they will become, as well as the more severe, protracted, and unyielding. The adherence of people to their own opinions and cause will, however, be more dogged and determined in proportion to their ignorance. Intelligence is one of the best conciliators in the world. The more we know, the more clearly we perceive others may know something and possess rights, as well as ourselves.

But obstinacy, nay, even persistency, in the family relation, is wholly misplaced. It will not do for the parties themselves, in a relation so intimate. No quarrels, it is said, are so much to be dreaded as those of families and churches. And why? Plainly because of their intimacy and sympathy. We sympathize more in sorrow and in joy,—and suffer more in our suffering, in the same proportion,—the nearer we are to each other; and hence, peculiarly so in the family and the church.

I have said that an unwillingness to make concessions, in the connubial state, will not do for the parties themselves. If, however, it is bad for the parties, it is much worse in its reflex action on the children. It will not do for them at all. Nor will it do for society,—it must be avoided, on every account. But if it must be avoided for humanity's sake, it must be, much more, for Christ's sake.

No person is well fitted to enter into matrimonial life, who is without a willingness to make concession or forbearance. We need, all of us, to be trained so as to have more respect than we usually possess for the rights and even the opinions of others. We may not, of course, be able to see every thing in the light they see it,—strange if we should. But we must be able to consent, without vexation, to differ from them, as well as to let them differ from us. To be able to agree to differ, in this world, is, after all, no very mean attainment. It is, at least, one that very few ever reach.

Tenacity of opinion and rights, and a want of forbearance and concession, are among the first traits of character which develop themselves in a family of children ; and for this reason it is that a husband and wife need to possess, in large measure, a willingness and an ability to set them a blessed example. There are very few things which conduce more than this to the peace of a family. But this trait of character is not difficult of detection. You need not spend many afternoons in the search. The greater difficulty will be in finding it. Yet such things have been, — such I have myself seen. Among the thousand millions of the human race, I trust there are a few, of the right spirit, whom I have not seen. No young person should despair, even if he should have to search from the age of fifteen to thirty, or as long as Jacob was compelled to serve with Laban.

One thing, however, is to be remembered. Where a quality which is desirable does not exist, or where we find one which is wholly undesirable, there is still some room for hope, if the individual be yet young, and is possessed of the spirit and love of progress. The latter qualification may perhaps atone for the want of many of the pre-requisites to marriage, since the presumption is, that the latter may be attained by patience and diligence. Where there is a *will*, it is said there is a way ; and under the love of progress, it is certainly so, with the fewest possible exceptions. There are a few whose slavery to habit is so strong

that, despite of their love of progress, their perfection is almost a hopeless thing. They "resolve and re-resolve," and shed an abundance of bitter tears of repentance, and yet "die the same."

The young couple who begin to entertain serious thoughts of a life-union, ought to understand each other and themselves, on this point, more fully and clearly than on almost any other. They can hardly talk it over too freely. Prevention is better than cure, everywhere; but especially in matters of this sort. Parents, moreover, should possess the full confidence of their children, and should hold frequent and full conversations with them, at suitable times, on this subject.

"Who would not give a trifle to prevent
What he would give a thousand worlds to cure?"

Parents are apt to regard their children as unwilling to converse on this topic, but it is not so. On the contrary, if managed in a proper manner, it is quite welcome to them. They are not only ready to meet them, but to meet them more than half way. Let parents, then, at least open the door for discussing this subject at suitable times, and on proper occasions.

I have been acquainted with one or two families in which the main idea here presented was fully carried out in practice. The fathers conversed as freely on courtship and marriage, with their sons, as on any

other topic ; and so did the mothers with their daughters. And the consequences appeared to be happy. In several instances, the opinion of the more experienced and aged parents was of great value. Nor have I ever known familiar counsels, in the family, to be slighted, or, even at the time, treated with a want of respect. Yet, parents, in the great majority of instances, refrain from opening their lips to their children on a topic as important, almost so, as their very lives, till it is wholly too late ; and then utter their dolorous complaints about their persistency and obstinacy and wrong-headedness ; and complain that the world in which they and we live is fast retrograding !

CHAPTER XVIII.

SELF-DENIAL.

ONE qualification, preliminary to that of which I have spoken in the preceding chapter, as well as preliminary to the conjugal state in general, is the power of self-denial. Our training, in the family, is unfavorable to this, I grant ; but so much the more necessary is it that we should cultivate it whenever and wherever we can, whether before marriage or afterward.

That young woman is but poorly prepared for matrimonial life, who says to her friends, by way of anticipation, "I mean to have just what I like." She may console herself with the idea that her tastes are simple, and her desires few ; but they will be likely to grow. Indeed, no person can escape the moral necessity, in life, — above all, in the family and at the head of the family, — of self-denial ; whether the desire is for few things or many.

The spirit of self-denial must be acquired early in life, in order to have it subserve the highest and most important purposes. It is almost in vain to hope to acquire it after years of indulgence. The

love of indulgence *grows* with the indulgence ; and becomes, ere we are aware, a great tree.

Do not confound self-denial with a species of instinct which, as far as it goes, greatly resembles it. Mothers, as you know, will do almost any thing, and refrain from almost any thing, for the sake of their children, especially their little ones. Yet, these same mothers will hardly deny themselves, in the smallest degree, for anybody else beyond their own family. Still, in the absence of a better motive to self-denial, this subserves a very good purpose. The great Creator thus compels to duty, where principle is often wanting.

The young woman, however, who looks forward to matrimonial life, should acquire the habit of self-denial, without waiting till she feels the imperious law of instinct. She should acquire it while among her brothers and sisters and playmates. Indeed, it is there that she will acquire it, if anywhere ; save in its application to the little group of whom I have already spoken.

But we have need of the power, as well as the willingness, to deny ourselves in a thousand instances which do not come under the law of instinct. Young men and young women, in single and in married life, should learn to deny themselves, out of respect to each other and to the world. Our matrimonial connection does not absolve us from the obligations we owe to society, as its members in general. Particu-

larly, however, should we be careful, in this matter, with respect to our relationship in marriage. Poorly will that husband discharge his duties and fulfil his marriage vows and obligations, who cannot deny himself almost any thing which God has given him, but his life, — and, some would say, even that, — when it comes in competition with her happiness.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONSISTENCY.

EVERY individual, who has been but one year at the head of a family, has some experience of the importance of the pre-requisite to happy and useful matrimony, which is designated by the term consistency. And happy indeed — I might say, thrice happy — are they who have not learned its importance from the want of it.

Parents are as variable as the various circumstances by which they are surrounded, and in which they are placed. It is true, that nothing would be more unreasonable than to demand of them that they should never vary at all. How could it be? And yet they should not be so changeable as they often are. The mercury of the moral thermometer should not rise or fall so suddenly and so far as it often does.

In times of trial from the outward pressure of perplexing circumstances, how common it is for parents to threaten with punishment those juvenile errors or delinquencies, which, at other times, when every thing is agreeable, would be borne without so much as a frown of disapprobation! In like manner they make

promises, under certain circumstances, which in other circumstances they would, on no account, be apt to make, and which they most heartily regret.

The hour of the day often changes our feelings. We promise in the morning what we would not at evening; and threaten at noon or at night what in the morning would have been so trivial an offence as to have entirely escaped our notice. We are even less civil, to friends and strangers both, at certain hours of the day, than at others. Certain seasons of the year affect us. We approve in autumn that which we denounced in the spring; and approve in summer what we denounce in winter.

Then, again, we express one set of opinions to one set of friends, and another to another,—I mean, on the same subject. It may not be wholly the result of duplicity; for we *feel* differently now from what we did then. Still, as in the former case, we bring upon ourselves, in the eyes of those who are, after all, very keen observers, the charge of inconsistency.

Does it seem strange to any of my readers that a grave author,—himself a parent,—should be found acknowledging the liability of parents to inconsistent conduct, from circumstances apparently so trifling as a difference of the temperature or of the hour of the day? Let them suspend their decision till they are, themselves, in the same relation.

Let me give you an example of this inconsistency, and leave you to judge whether or not it is a

trifling affair. A father missed his hatchet, one morning, when in a great hurry, and gave out to his large family of children that they had misplaced it, and that, if it were not in its place forthwith, he would punish with great severity every one of them. The hatchet was soon found.

And yet it was not found in a hurry. There was little of agitation about it. No one had very strong fears of punishment. But why not? Because every one knew the father's inconsistency. They knew that he was not careful, himself, to keep his tools in their proper place; and that he would soon be over his haste, and then all would be well enough. Or, if they feared his wrath, they neither loved nor respected him any more on account of it. In short, he was so often threatening, and so seldom executing, and a man of so many known inconsistencies, that he had no influence.

Now, in the formation of youthful acquaintances, especially of the opposite sex, avoid, as much as conveniently you can, those who are given to frequent gross inconsistencies. They who are least guilty in this respect are guilty enough. The delinquency is easily discoverable. Only have your eyes open to its existence, and your mind pre-occupied with a full understanding of its evil tendencies, and you will have no difficulty.

CHAPTER XX.

PUNCTUALITY. , .

THERE are few virtues which, at a hasty view, seem to be of so little importance, whose influence is so favorable on matrimonial life as that of punctuality. Perhaps its value has attracted less attention, from the fact that so few have practised it; though the general rule seems to be the reverse,—that things are valued in proportion to their scarcity.

Much has been said of Washington, Nelson, and other eminent men, as owing their efficiency, in no little degree, to their great punctuality. I do not think the influence of this trait of character has ever been overrated; nor that it easily can be. Especially is this true of punctuality in all the early engagements of the day. The evening of the day—like the evening of life—takes its shape very much from its morning. An impulse given thus early is not lost during the whole day.

Now, if punctuality is valuable, either for its relative or its intrinsic effects anywhere in life, it is in the family. All who propose, in due time, to occupy the divinely important position of its chief-magistracy,

should study the art, and form the habit, of being punctual.

If the term punctuality requires any definition, let me say, that by it I mean neither more nor less than truthfulness with regard to all engagements. I care very little with whom these engagements are made, — myself or others. Nor does it make any difference whether these are mental, verbal, or written. An engagement is an engagement; and should be always and forever binding.

Thus, suppose I make it a principle to rise at a given hour,—that hour to be designated by the striking of the clock. Now, it may happen that if I remain in bed one, two, five, or ten minutes after the clock strikes, no eye but the Divine or All-seeing will ever know it. It may also happen that my delinquency will have no ill effect upon my after conduct. I may possibly be punctual in every thing else, just as if nothing had happened. Such a result, however, is not probable. But what then? Shall I venture to remain? May I not delay one minute,—just for once? But why not? Simply, because it would be wrong. I have practically promised to rise at the time. It is my duty to fulfil my engagements, unless circumstances change; and, as yet, there has been no such change.

Suppose, again, there is a regular dinner-hour. It is at twelve o'clock, precisely. I have access to the clock, and need make no mistake. Shall I wait till

the clock strikes before I quit my work? It will only make me five or six minutes too late. Or shall I leave off early enough to be able to sit down at the striking of the clock? The latter, most undoubtedly. It is true, I may not greatly incommode my family by a little delay. I may not rob of their time any friends who are waiting for me. Still, by establishing this hour, or by consenting to its establishment, I have virtually agreed to be there exactly at the time, unless some extra circumstance comes in which I did not expect and had it not in my power to control; and I am in duty bound to keep my engagement. The wrong done, if I fail, will be chiefly a wrong done to myself; and would operate to make me lax in other particulars, if not in this. But there is another reason. It is of great importance to have time enough for all our employments and avocations; and, by being punctual in them all, we take a course which is most likely to secure this point. It gives an impulse or impetus which is favorable. Every thing in life seems to go more easily for punctuality; while every thing seems doubly difficult when we fail of our duty by a want of it.

Now, there is nothing in the way of ascertaining the character of our youthful companions, in this particular; and this, too, without seeming to act the spy upon each other. It will show itself everywhere. I do not mean to say that a young man or a young woman is to be set down as not only bad, but abso-

lutely incorrigible, simply because he fails slightly, in this one particular, important as it is. And yet, it is a fault, a serious one.

Let me again call your attention to the importance, in this point of view, of having the interchange of youthful visits — hitherto called courtship — conducted, as I have hitherto maintained, in the presence of parents and friends, and in the afternoon. In no other way can this and many other traits of character be so well ascertained. In no other way can the young understand each other on a point of the utmost importance to their well-being, both here and hereafter. I know of few things better calculated to improve the condition of society, in all the relations of life, matrimonial and single, than this; and I entreat you not to overlook it. Do not say it is a trifle, till you have recalled the fact, that our existence seems to be made up of trifles, in themselves considered; though they form, in the result, the mighty aggregate which we call life.

CHAPTER XXI.

DECISION.

THE general importance of decision of character is well known. On this subject, however, no man has written to better purpose than John Foster. He makes a man's usefulness, as well as happiness, in this world, to turn, in no trifling degree, on this single point.

Nowhere, however, is this trait more useful—I might even say more indispensable—than in the walks of matrimonial life. What can the father or the mother do without it? More children are spoiled by indecision than by almost any thing I know. It is destructive alike to individual progress and to social happiness.

When I think of the vast importance of this prerequisite to marriage, I sometimes wonder how it happens that a thing so indispensable to the well-being of the family should be so rarely possessed. The utmost indecision everywhere prevails, even among the more intelligent. Not one mother in six—if, indeed, one in sixty—gives her simple direction, “Do this,” or “Do that,” without qualification. She

seems continually in fear lest her commands should seem too arbitrary. You may do this, she indeed says; but at the same time appends one or more reasons why, which, though they show her republican spirit, and perchance her willingness to make good republicans of her children, nevertheless, open a door to discussion, and remove decision very far away. Nor are mothers involved in greater guilt on the score of indecision than fathers are, with this exception, that fathers seem too busy to be undecided; and hence, in the good providence of God, one blunder in social life shuts the door against another.

I have said that, in five cases of six, if not more, mothers condescend to reason with their children, or make explanations, after they have issued their commands. But I have spoken of the more intelligent. Among the ignorant and passionate it is sometimes still worse. Parents, of both sexes, not only put themselves on the same republican level with their children, but even compete with them, in loudness, if not severity, of language!

What a pity it is that parents cannot be more decided! Why can they not make up their minds in regard to what they ought to demand of a child, and then simply make it, and stop? I do not know that there is any harm in making explanations and giving reasons beforehand; but, when we come to the requisition or command, we should be final, — decided. Not a word more should be said, by parent or child. The

thing should be done ; there is no time now for parleying, — the time has come for action.

Of course, there are exceptions to every rule which could be given, — at least, to every human rule. There may be difficulties in the way of complying with a parent's request, or command, or decision, which the child has reason to believe the parent did not foresee. These may be stated ; and no wise parent — except in cases which are exceedingly pressing and urgent — would hesitate to consider them. Let me present a few illustrations of my meaning, in practical lessons on the subject of decision.

A mother says to her daughter, "Now you may take your knitting a little while." — "How much shall I knit, mother?" — "Why, you may knit about ten times round, I believe." — "O mother, that is a great deal ; won't six times do?" — "No, daughter, ten times are not too many." — "Mother, that is a great deal too much ; I will knit six times round." — "Well, on the whole, we will say *eight* times." — "Well, is that all you will ask of me for the whole day, mother?" — "Why, child, do what I have ordered, in the first place." — "But, mother, I want to know whether I shall have any thing more to do besides that." And thus the conversation runs on. Nor is this the worst. The door is opened for discussion on every future occasion ; and it is ten to one but the occasions will be as frequent as the mother's commands.

Now, the principal error of the mother, in such a

case, lies in not considering well, in the first place, what and how much she would have the daughter do; and then, instead of saying "*about,*" or "*I believe,*" or, what is very often heard, "*I guess,*" she should simply say, "Daughter, you may take your knitting and knit ten times round." There should in such a case be no opportunity for a reply; nor should a reply, if made, receive any attention.

A father, who is a farmer, says to his son: "You may dig potatoes to-day. It is a fine, warm day, and by and by we shall have such cold weather that your fingers will be cold in digging." Now such a father may not be conscious of any want of decision of character; but the fact is proved by what follows. "Why, father," says the son, "I want to pick up apples to-day; if it comes to be very cold weather it will freeze the apples, and injure them." The father reasons the case with his son, and, whether he yields the point or not, generally leaves him with a greater degree of confidence in his own and a less degree in his father's judgment than he had before. He also leaves the door wide open for a freer as well as bolder discussion, at the very next command. For, instead of wishing to pick up apples, which would be less fatiguing than digging potatoes, he will boldly claim the right to go a-fishing. "This fine day may be the last of the whole season, and you *must* let me go to-day, father." The father very generally yields; and the son, though he may not exult over him, like the

;

cock on the dung-hill over his fellow, feels — just as he does — that he has achieved a victory.

Does not every father, of common sense, know that, after having told his son to do such or such a job of work, there should be nothing more said about it? In speaking of the warm weather, he only invites the son to a discussion of the main question, whether or not it is best that the potatoes should be dug, in preference to doing something which is more agreeable to his whim or fancy; and he ought to know enough of human nature to know which way the son will incline.

There is another thing which is worthy of our favorable consideration, in this connection. The children of those parents who possess true decision of character — who make up their judgment, and then decide without any misgiving or qualification, and without opening the door for any — have the most obedient and cheerful and contented children. They will not utter half as many complaints, nor exhibit half as many sour looks, nor make half as many feeble attempts to smother a flame that seems ready to burst forth, but of which they are ashamed,—as the children of those parents who are so very democratic that they decide, and then leave the subject on which they have decided open for discussion.

But if these things are so, — if not a little of the happiness or misery of the family state depends on possessing enough of true decision of character to

enable us to make No and Yes to be final,— the end of the law, — a tribunal whence there is no appeal, — then how exceedingly important is this trait as a prerequisite in matrimony! But it is not easy to ascertain how this matter is, by seeing a young man or a young woman some half a dozen or a dozen times in a mask, or on a stage, or in a public promenade. It is at some point much nearer the domestic circle or home. It is in the less formal and much more natural and preferable family visit, when all is quiet; at least, comparatively so. It is in that best of schools, for the acquisition of the best of lessons, — the family school.

CHAPTER XXII.

ORDER AND SYSTEM.

"ORDER," says Pope, in his *Essay on Man*, "is heaven's first law." But, whether first, or second, or fiftieth, or thousandth, it is a law not only of heaven but of earth. It is, at least, a law by which earth herself, as one of many planetary bodies, is governed in all her movements. She turns just so often, and in just such ways ; and from her beaten track of centuries, if not thousands of centuries, she never departs.

Suppose it were otherwise. Suppose she varied but a few miles. Suppose that, at certain points of her annual path around the sun, she came a little nearer Jupiter than she now does. Or suppose that, in her disordered, unsystematic movements, she should occasionally get nearer the sun than now. I do not affirm there would be much danger of doing herself or Jupiter or the sun any considerable mischief, or of receiving from them any impressions or influences which would be unfavorable. But it is by no means certain that in process of time she might not conflict with something for which the great Creator has appointed a path. I would not, for

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Suppose it were otherwise. Suppose she varied but a few miles. Suppose that, at certain points of her annual path around the sun, she came a little nearer Jupiter than she does. Or suppose that, in her disordered, or irregular movements, she should occasionally get in the way of some other planet. I do not see how this could be done without doing her mischief, and creating confusion or in-
But it is by the great order of the system that she might avoid such the great mischief, and would not, for
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millions of worlds, run the risk of it, were it within the reach of my power.

There are many kinds of order and system, but order and system of some sort we must have if we would accomplish any thing. Some, I know, seem inclined to laugh at the man or woman of order and system; and to say that, for their part, they greatly prefer freedom to slavery to a certain routine, in any thing, — labor, study, devotion, or even meals. For I have heard even the idea of taking our meals at particular hours ridiculed as a species of slavery to habit.

I have said, in another chapter, that the children of the most decided, and as some would say, most arbitrary parents — who say, Go, and the mandate is, obeyed at once, without qualification and without apology; and who say, Come, and no one dares to delay, defer, or to question — are the most free, and exult most in their freedom. The same is true of those persons, old or young, who are most subject to order and system. They feel their freedom, and exult in it twice as much as the disorderly.

But, what is of much more consequence, it makes them twice as efficient, — for good or for evil. Satan could not do half the mischief he now does, if he labored at random or haphazard. He, doubtless, has his order and system. Of course, I do not recommend order and system that it may increase your efficiency for mischief. My argument is this. If

the bad are made much worse by means of a reliance on order and system, the good may be made much better. It is said to be a very poor rule that will not work both ways. And, since so many of our race are practically in league with the grand destroyer, and are his co-workers by order and system, how unspeakably important it is to train up to order and system as large a host as possible, to repel his machinations and defeat his purposes.

But the first lessons on this subject must be taken in the family, or they will never be taken at all. Every thing must have a place, and every thing must be kept in its place. There must be a time for everything, and every thing must be done in its time. So strongly are these ideas impressed on the minds of some men, that they post up in their shops or houses or factories, — wherever they think it may be useful, — in large print, something likely to produce these results. One of the most efficient printers in Boston, of many years ago, — S. N. Dickinson, — used to post up the following, in very large glaring type: "Every thing should have a place, and every thing should be kept in its place." And his project succeeded. Order and system reigned throughout his whole establishment.

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In the selection of an associate for life, be specially cautious, therefore, on this point. But here, again, you must pardon me for saying that in no way can this trait of character be detected so well, as on the plan of social intercourse which I most earnestly advocate. And, even then, you may not be as successful as you desire to be, unless perchance your visits, or at least your general intimacy, should extend to a long series of years.

It will usually happen that they who are orderly in one thing, are so in others, — I might perhaps say, in all others. To know whether a young person is orderly, you will do well to see his books, his tools, his toys, — if he have any, — perhaps his wardrobe. If he cultivates a garden, see if there is order and system there. In short, there are a thousand things in which this trait will show itself, if it exists. Seek it, then, with all the perseverance you would a hidden treasure, and never enter into matrimony without it, — with one solitary exception. The love of progress, as you already know, answereth all things, as Solomon says money does. It is, at least, the only valuable substitute. And yet, after all, I should prefer both.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NEATNESS OF PERSON AND DRESS.

It may excite the smiles of some to find personal neatness placed on the catalogue of marriage qualifications. But let it be remembered that by neatness I do not mean fastidiousness, or even prettiness; but such an attention to ourselves, in the matter of external appearance, as shall prevent actual repulsion or dislike. To win the favor of our fellow beings, or to be even accessible to them as helpers, whether in matrimonial life or elsewhere, we must, at least, endeavor not to be disagreeable.

I am far enough from supposing that neatness and ornament are inseparable; or, indeed, that they have any natural connection. On the contrary, I have witnessed the most unpardonable neglect of cleanliness in more than one individual who was highly decorated. How exceedingly fond of expensive and gay attire are some of the sons of the forest, both in the old world and in the new! And they are still more so of ornament. I have seen female Indians — and even Africans — who wore a large amount of silver in the form of jewels, rings, etc., whose skins were as

forbidding as their costume was intended to be inviting. And the eccentric, but sometimes pointed and pithy, William Cobbett, speaks of young women, in a condition of society very different from what is usually called savage or barbarous, who, while they are dressed *a la mode* from top to toe, are yet negligent of personal cleanliness to an extreme which is almost incredible, except to those who have witnessed just such *accumulations* as those to which our eccentric English author refers.

I grant that the whole subject of dress is attended with difficulties. By those who are determined to keep friendship with the world, it is, and ever has been, confidently affirmed that the true method of dressing ourselves, is in such a manner that no one will notice us, or seem to know whether we are dressed or not. In other words, we must be so dressed as not to appear singular. But this, in fewest words, is, simply to comply with the existing fashions, — or to dress as, in general, others do. It is not, I admit, to lead in the fashions; but it is to follow them.

But shall we attempt to follow the fashions, as they come to us? Do we know by what authority they come? Have the abandoned, of either sex, whether in the old world or the new, any right to impose on sober Christian people the form or quality of their dress? Is it even decorous? •

There should be no conventionalism about our

dress. And, though it may require a greater amount of self-denial than ordinarily falls to the human lot to repudiate this conventionalism entirely, yet, in selecting an associate for life, it is certainly desirable to keep as far distant from it as possible. They are the wisest of our enlightened young men and women, who, in their dress, conform most nearly to the laws of their nature. It is, indeed, true, that not many young persons have studied the laws of their own frame; but, then, it is also true that there is a kind of intuitive good sense, which comes very near being a proper substitute for it.

Our clothing, personally considered, can have but three or four legitimate purposes. First, to cover our bodies. Secondly, to protect them from mechanical injury. Thirdly, to keep us warm, by preventing the too rapid escape of the caloric which is generated within us. And can we not find, even in the present deteriorated condition of society, a considerable number of persons who dress very nearly in accordance with this standard; or, at least, as if this *were* their standard?

A fourth use of bodily clothing is, I know, sometimes deemed legitimate; even by good men and women. I allude to its application in the case of deformity. The question whether we have a moral right so to dress ourselves as to conceal personal deformities, I do not here propose to discuss. I will only say, that it will be found extremely difficult to draw

case, lies in not considering well, in the first place, what and how much she would have the daughter do; and then, instead of saying "*about*," or "*I believe*," or, what is very often heard, "*I guess*," she should simply say, "Daughter, you may take your knitting and knit ten times round." There should in such a case be no opportunity for a reply; nor should a reply, if made, receive any attention.

A father, who is a farmer, says to his son: "You may dig potatoes to-day. It is a fine, warm day, and by and by we shall have such cold weather that your fingers will be cold in digging." Now such a father may not be conscious of any want of decision of character; but the fact is proved by what follows. "Why, father," says the son, "I want to pick up apples to-day; if it comes to be very cold weather it will freeze the apples, and injure them." The father reasons the case with his son, and, whether he yields the point or not, generally leaves him with a greater degree of confidence in his own and a less degree in his father's judgment than he had before. He also leaves the door wide open for a freer as well as bolder discussion, at the very next command. For, instead of wishing to pick up apples, which would be less fatiguing than digging potatoes, he will boldly claim the right to go a-fishing. "This fine day may be the last of the whole season, and you *must* let me go to-day, father." The father very generally yields; and the son, though he may not exult over him, like the

cock on the dung-hill over his fellow, feels — just as he does — that he has achieved a victory.

Does not every father, of common sense, know that, after having told his son to do such or such a job of work, there should be nothing more said about it? In speaking of the warm weather, he only invites the son to a discussion of the main question, whether or not it is best that the potatoes should be dug, in preference to doing something which is more agreeable to his whim or fancy; and he ought to know enough of human nature to know which way the son will incline.

There is another thing which is worthy of our favorable consideration, in this connection. The children of those parents who possess true decision of character — who make up their judgment, and then decide without any misgiving or qualification, and without opening the door for any — have the most obedient and cheerful and contented children. They will not utter half as many complaints, nor exhibit half as many sour looks, nor make half as many feeble attempts to smother a flame that seems ready to burst forth, but of which they are ashamed,—as the children of those parents who are so very democratic that they decide, and then leave the subject on which they have decided open for discussion.

But if these things are so, — if not a little of the happiness or misery of the family state depends on possessing enough of true decision of character to

enable us to make No and Yes to be final,— the end of the law, — a tribunal whence there is no appeal, — then how exceedingly important is this trait as a prerequisite in matrimony! But it is not easy to ascertain how this matter is, by seeing a young man or a young woman some half a dozen or a dozen times in a mask, or on a stage, or in a public promenade. It is at some point much nearer the domestic circle or home. It is in the less formal and much more natural and preferable family visit, when all is quiet; at least, comparatively so. It is in that best of schools, for the acquisition of the best of lessons, — the family school.

CHAPTER XXII.

ORDER AND SYSTEM.

"ORDER," says Pope, in his Essay on Man, "is heaven's first law." But, whether first, or second, or fiftieth, or thousandth, it is a law not only of heaven but of earth. It is, at least, a law by which earth herself, as one of many planetary bodies, is governed in all her movements. She turns just so often, and in just such ways ; and from her beaten track of centuries, if not thousands of centuries, she never departs.

Suppose it were otherwise. Suppose she varied but a few miles. Suppose that, at certain points of her annual path around the sun, she came a little nearer Jupiter than she now does. Or suppose that, in her disordered, unsystematic movements, she should occasionally get nearer the sun than now. I do not affirm there would be much danger of doing herself or Jupiter or the sun any considerable mischief, or of receiving from them any impressions or influences which would be unfavorable. But it is by no means certain that in process of time she might not conflict with something for which the great Creator has appointed a path. I would not, for

millions of worlds, run the risk of it, were it within the reach of my power.

There are many kinds of order and system, but order and system of some sort we must have if we would accomplish any thing. Some, I know, seem inclined to laugh at the man or woman of order and system; and to say that, for their part, they greatly prefer freedom to slavery to a certain routine, in any thing, — labor, study, devotion, or even meals. For I have heard even the idea of taking our meals at particular hours ridiculed as a species of slavery to habit.

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the line between a lawful degree of such attention, and that more doubtful, but scarcely less frequent, degree of indulgence, which is deemed necessary to set off the individual human form to what is called the best advantage ; or, as some would say, to have it in good taste.

There is one thought, in connection with this topic, which should neither be overlooked nor forgotten. So far as dress is designed by the wearer to decorate or set off the body, the ultimate tendency on morals must ever be unfavorable. If, by this display, we could set off the mind or heart to advantage, the case would be altered. For, however wrong it might or might not be to clothe the mental faculties, or the affections of the heart, were such a thing possible, in what might be deemed good taste, it is difficult to believe that it would have anything like a deteriorating or demoralizing tendency ; whereas, nothing can be plainer than that all such decoration of the body as has a tendency to attract notice, has a direct and certain injurious influence.

The last remark is particularly applicable to everything which is ornamental. I know it is argued, that since God has seen fit to clothe the vegetable kingdom in transcendent beauty, it is but meet that the animal kingdom, which in its intrinsic value is so much above the vegetable world, should be beautified by such external arrangements as art may be able to furnish. But would it render the animals below man any more

beautiful than they now are, to dress them out in any manner to us at present conceivable? Are the horse and the elephant, even when caparisoned for draught or war, in truly better taste than in their native costume? It is, at least, difficult to believe that such tricking out of the animals would be likely to give us very exalted ideas of their moral elevation. It might remind us of their affinity to Jacko and his brethren of the mimicking race; but not of any valuable internal qualities.

Is it not true that man is at best sufficiently animal; and that, in his intercourse with his fellow beings, he is always sufficiently inclined to have his thoughts on the body? In other words, is he not, especially in youth, naturally sensual? Is that attire, in man or woman, which is well calculated to call attention to a pretty *body*, — a merely animal body, — likely to have a good moral tendency? But it seems to me I need not add. If there be an axiom well established in the moral world, it is, that whatever tends to remind us or our associates that we are animals, and to keep prominent this idea, is of doubtful and even sensual tendency.

They who maintain that the true idea, in our dress, is so to arrange our clothing that we may not be thought of in the crowd, will object to the foregoing train of reasoning, as utterly unsound, because, as they will say, it is unsound in its premises. Their objection would be valid, if their doctrine were true; but it is

not. People do not dress in the existing fashion in order to avoid the public gaze, but to secure it. The best evidence of this is found in the fact, that not only the leaders of the fashion, but their devotees, make every possible exertion to change the fashion of their dress, as soon as it comes to be extensively and largely followed; especially by those whom they choose to call the vulgar. This disposition to change among the *élite* is so strong, in some countries, as in France, for example, that their fashions are said to change almost as often as the moon.

I do not say that in following the fashion, and that, too, for the sake of display, we are always conscious of an animal or sensual tendency. Nay, I do not believe it is so. For woman, as much as man, — and other things being equal, such as the degree of her intellectual and moral cultivation, much more so, — is fond of fashion, and of frequent and rapid change in that fashion. Whereas, it is well known that woman, naturally, is far enough from being as sensual in her tendencies as the other sex. But, then, the mischief in the case is, that the influence of dress, and particularly that which is showy and ornamental, falls more largely, as a general rule, on man than on woman, because man, though quite enough inclined to display, and decoration, and ornament, — since we often see him with rings and jewels, — is yet much less so, after all, than she.

It may be said, in general, that the doctrine I have

here advanced is new; and not only new, but opposed to facts. For, were it true that gaudy and showy and expensive clothing, and particularly ornament, had naturally an animal and sensual tendency, how is it, we are asked, that woman, who, in her present depressed condition, is less intellectual than man, has not become, long ago, as sensual as her lord? The reply is, the effect of her display is to set off her own person in the eyes of the other sex, and not of her own. Woman is influenced by a fondness for the other sex; and, so far as that partakes of the character of which I have been speaking, just so far is it unfavorable to female purity and virtue. But, then, it happens that our sex, with a few exceptions, do not attach so much importance to display and ornament, in their own dress, as females do; and it might be worth while to inquire whether this is not one of the very causes why woman, in all ages and countries and circumstances, has been more virtuous and pure than man.

The shrewd defender of show and ornament may still say: But, if the eye is attracted and the mind and heart debauched, as it were, by gaudy dress and much ornament, what difference does it make with our females whether it is their own sex, or ours, which wear them? If it is on their own sex, they can see it as well as if it were on ours. We may even be reminded of facts, such as the careful, scrutinizing gaze at the externals of every one who comes into a hall or church where woman is sitting. The facts

are not denied, but, then, we must not forget that there is another fact to put alongside of it. Woman, looking on gay and ornamented woman, is very differently affected from what she is when looking on the gay and ornamented person of the other sex ; just as man is differently affected by gaudy dress and costly ornament on his own sex, from what he is when there is the same degree of display on the part of the female. There is, as I have before maintained, a natural difference between the sexes, in this particular. Man, already sensual, is made more so by these appliances to the female frame ; whereas, woman, not naturally so, is not so easily perverted by it, even when applied to man, whom, it is true, she loves, but without any normally sensual tendencies.

I do not say that woman is never perverted, in any degree, by dress and ornament ; for I believe she may be so. All I contend for, is, that the tendencies, in the two sexes, are not equal in degree ; and, hence, the reason why the evil influences against which, in this chapter, I have so freely inveighed, fall most heavily on our own sex. But it is not to be denied, or even concealed, that, when woman has begun to be sensual ; and to sympathize, in this respect, with the vicious of the other sex, these influences begin to operate to her deterioration with new and unheard-of force. "A shameless woman is the worst of men," would not, here, be inapplicable. In truth, no class of society have such a fondness for show and ornament, — not

even the savages themselves, — as those of the female world, in our cities and elsewhere, who are lost to all true female delicacy and virtue. In truth, as I have before asserted, it is from the abandoned of the old world and the new, that most of our gay and showy apparel, and even of our ornaments, come to us. Even the nominally Christian world takes its laws, with regard to dress and other externals, from the prostitutes of London, Paris, and New York.

Whenever, therefore, gay people associate for the purpose of mutual acquaintance, whether in the way I have elsewhere recommended or otherwise, they should do it with this great fact before them, viz., that a strong attachment or devotedness to personal display by dress and ornament assimilates us to the savage and the monkey on the one hand, or to those abominable excrescences of fashionable life on the other hand, to which I have just now adverted. Were this idea impressed early on the mind and heart of both sexes, how different would be the results from some of those which we now so often witness, and which we not unfrequently have to deplore! How much less, in that case, than in present circumstances, would marriage resemble a lottery, or even a gaming-table!

But, in all this, I have not intended to say one word against neatness, either of person or dress. Here, in this particular, we have law, — divine, physiological law, — not mere conventionalism, nor mere

fancy. And he who, being disgusted with a fondness for display and glitter, should run to the extreme of personal neglect and downright slovenliness, would be about as wise as he who, to avoid the glare of the sun at midday, should plunge, at once, into the thickest dungeon darkness.

Whatever is worn, by either sex, should be cleanly, healthful, and should be well applied or put on. There is no known apology for foul clothing, nor for an unnatural shape, nor for unhealthy materials ; nor yet for what some would call half-dressing.

No conventional law, whatever, — I mean, now, no existing fashion, — should induce a young person of either sex to wear, from day to day, voluntarily or willingly, deeply soiled garments ; so deeply as to be offensive to any of the senses. There may be exceptions, I know, to the universality of this rule ; and, yet, I hardly know how there can be many. If no one else can clean a garment for us, there are few of us who cannot do it for ourselves ; at least, in part. Dirty garments are physiologically objectionable, even if they give no offence to the eye or nasal organ. They are not so good regulators of our bodily temperature as cleanly ones. Besides, the filthy particles, detached from time to time by the heat of our bodies or otherwise, from our clothing, may be drawn with our breath into our lungs, to poison, or at least corrupt, our blood. In truth, it is not quite certain that the filth of the clothing may not be absorbed by

the skin, and thus find way to the blood still more directly. So that this doctrine of cleanliness, in regard to our apparel, is founded on law, and not on fashion and caprice.

Our dress should sit easily to our bodies, so as not to impede their motions. On the one hand, no fashion whatever which fancy may dictate can make a heavy shawl or cloak, thrown over the shoulders while we walk, in accordance with the laws of God in the human frame. These laws require us to exercise our arms freely in walking; but such garments as I have mentioned, directly or indirectly prevent it. Garments loose and flowing, depending from the body and encumbering the legs as far as the heels, are also a conventionalism that stands opposed to the laws of the human frame. No matter, to this end, whether they be worn by man or woman. But, on the other hand, garments as tight, almost so, as the skin, are wrong, for other reasons equally physiological. So are garments which are too hot. Thus the thick, hot head-dress of our own sex is as wrong as wrong can be. If we wear hats at all, they should be very light, and, if possible, porous. The Todas, or Todajas, a somewhat ancient and numerous tribe of the East Indies, never wear any thing at all on their heads, even under the glowing heat of a tropical sun; and no tribe in that region is regarded as more civilized, healthful, and happy, or in better general taste. They

seem almost advanced to that refinement which is common in central Europe.

But, I repeat, that, when we wear a garment, whatever may be its shape or material, it should be well put on. A hat just thrown on one side or the top of the head, or a bonnet on the back part of it, or a cravat just wrapped, in a slovenly way, around the neck, or the feet slip-shod, is to be set down as not only opposed to good taste, but to the laws of morality. We are bound, by the love we owe to our neighbor, not to offend him in a matter of this sort, where the attention of a moment will contribute so much to his good feeling, while, at the same time, it violates no known law.

Must we, then, I shall be asked, discard all the laws of fashion at once? I have not said exactly this. I have only said what *ought to be*, in general. And what ought to be is undoubtedly the duty of somebody; if not of everybody. But I should be loth to say, to any individual who was ignorant of this whole subject, Thou art the man or the woman to obey the higher laws of the Creator, in every particular, forthwith and forever. I should be exceedingly unwilling to seem to interfere with his free agency to an extent which should make my own standard of duty, in this matter, the guide to his conscience. I would gladly enlighten him on this subject as fast as possible. This, at least, would be safe and right.

But there is a wide difference between implicitly following the fashions, even at a distance, and desiring to follow the will of God, by studying his laws in regard to this subject. Some, who are not quite willing to be known as the advocates of a blind and implicit adherence to conventional law, the moment it is imposed, have laid down a rule already alluded to: Neither be the first nor the last in the fashion. This may do, better than nothing, for our guide; but how much better would it be for us, were we to pay no regard at all to the ever-varying standard of fashion!

In selecting an associate, in the journey of life, if you cannot find one who, at a yet immature age, is at once sufficiently enlightened and bold to rebel against customs which are both arbitrary and unphysiological, you can at least endeavor to find those who are not wholly enslaved to external appearance. You may, and should, go thus far. Young women or young men, whose eyes and tongues seem utterly lost from morning to evening, and from hour to hour, unless they are resting or descanting on the beauties or the merits of dress, may be pretty easily detected, and ought to be avoided. They ought, I mean, to be rejected as bosom friends and life-companions. Where our treasure is, there our hearts will be also. In the free and comparatively unrestrained conversation of that species of social intercourse I have elsewhere

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so much recommended, nothing will be easier to the wise, who have been trained by the wise, than to detect the idolatry of dress and ornament, and the worship of the goddess of Fashion. Let them not only detect, but keep aloof from it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

INDUSTRY AND GOOD HABITS.

INDUSTRY, whenever and wherever it exists, is itself a habit; for I have shown elsewhere, as in my remarks on Benevolence, that it is not natural to us. That, except to relieve his own sensations of distress, from want of food, drink, warmth, etc., — in other words, to relieve pain, — no one would exert himself so much as to lift a finger.

And yet, we find multitudes of our race who toil from ten or twelve to sixteen or eighteen hours a day, not merely for one day, or two, or ten, but from year to year. How does this happen? If industry is not natural to us, but is only a something super-added, as it were, how comes it that so large a portion of our race, — a portion so large as to constitute the majority, — are so exceedingly and actively industrious?

Some, as you know, are industrious from necessity. The manufacturers of the old world and the new, but particularly of the former; a large proportion of the mechanics and many of the farmers, of all parts of the world, and not a few professional men, of all

countries, are compelled, like the horse in the treadmill, to labor for their daily support. They must labor to live. If they cease to labor, they are crushed by hunger, or they perish from nakedness.

The number of individuals who are industrious from principle ; who labor because it is right to labor ; and who would labor just as hard as they now do were they as rich as the Rothschilds, is, in my own view, exceedingly small. They may be — they probably are — more numerous in Christian countries than in any other ; but they are as rare almost as diamonds, even under the full blaze of the gospel sun. Yet industry, in man or woman, is a qualification for matrimonial life which is exceedingly desirable, and should be most earnestly and most assiduously sought.

It may be difficult to distinguish the genuine from the false, in this case ; but it is worth the trial. The reward is very great. Industry, from necessity, when no higher motive can be had, is exceedingly valuable ; but industry from principle is more valuable still. It may be well, however, to say that we often find a mixture of motive, — the power of principle seldom exists alone, except when impelled by a sacred regard to Christian duty.

Industry, however, loses half its efficiency when not accompanied by frugality. But of this I shall speak in another chapter. It also involves other good habits, to a few of which I must now call your attention.

In its largest and noblest sense, industry includes early rising. I have seldom known an industrious person who rose very late, unless he also retired late. One mistress of a family whom I knew rose late, exceedingly late, from the beginning of her matrimonial life to its end. But, then, she retired very late; so that on the whole she labored as many hours as any of her neighbors, and more than the majority of them. But I never knew half a dozen such persons in my whole life. Early risers are not always industrious; but in general, I repeat, industrious people are early risers.

Industry, of course, generally includes activity. In very few employments could a person be industrious without being active. In many sedentary employments, it is true that only a small portion of the moving powers are employed; but even here there is activity.

Industrious people are generally cleanly people. They may not always practice all the external formalities which custom seems inclined to impose. They may not bathe every morning at just such an hour, and in just such a prescribed manner; but in general they bathe, and they are almost universally cleanly. The few exceptions I have known serve but to confirm the general rule.

Industry is sometimes carried to excess. It is true, that many more people *rust out*, than wear out; but it is also true that here and there an individual

may be fairly said to wear out, and to wear out prematurely and unnecessarily. Man ought to last, despite of over-active muscular efforts, at least one hundred years.

The example of active industry, as a Christian principle, should be set by both parents, and should be without intermission. Each day should have its duties; and no individual should, on any slight grounds, be excused from them. There should be few holidays.

He who does not regard industry as a pre-requisite to marriage, should by no means enter into that state of life. He will neither discharge his whole duty to himself nor to others. He may not fall further below the highest standard of excellence than many others; but he will fall very far short of Christian perfection.

CHAPTER XXV.

FRUGALITY AND ECONOMY.

No one seems to me duly qualified for matrimonial life, who is not well grounded both in frugality and economy. I know they are *old-fashioned* virtues, but they are nevertheless *virtues*; and a just regard to them, in the training of a household, has more to do with human happiness than most people are aware.

It makes a vast difference with a family whether or not they are frugal and economical. A hundred dollars, with frugality, will go as far, in a family, as a hundred and twenty-five or a hundred and fifty without it.

My counsel to the young, then, is: do not despise these good, old-fashioned qualifications. Waste neither time nor money, but make the best possible use of both. Indeed, waste nothing. I knew an old woman, of about ninety years of age, who made it a daily principle to earn as much as she could, and save every penny she earned. She said she did it as a Christian duty, rather than from a regard to any wants of herself or those about her, — whether real or supposed.

These virtues of frugality and economy need not be sought with doubting or fear. If they exist, they will be manifested in a thousand ways, and on a thousand little occasions; and this, too, in very early life. I do not mean, herein, to affirm that we cannot be frugal and economical unless the tendency in that direction is inherited. Education can do much to make up for our deficiencies of inheritance; but never to make us what we might be with the law of hereditary descent in our favor.

We have the highest possible example on our side, when we commend those good old-fashioned virtues. He who came down from heaven, not only to teach man how to die, but how to live, said, on a very important occasion, "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost." Fragments of other things which contribute to human happiness must be taken care of, as well as food. Fragments of time and money are of at least equal value; and the former of the two much more so.

"I would not enter on my list of friends,

Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,"

the individual, male or female, young or old, who despises frugality and economy. All, I know, are ready to repel the charge, whenever and wherever made; and yet, in practical life, almost everybody, by his manner pleads guilty to it. I am not quite sure that the female sex is more at fault, in this respect,

than our own ; but for various reasons I am strongly inclined to think they are.

And yet I should not wholly despair at an early age — say that of eighteen or twenty — of reformation in this particular, when there was a deep and abiding conviction of its necessity, and where all other important qualifications for matrimonial life were found to exist. I have known a few, of both sexes, in whom a radical change, in this particular, was effected at a much later period than even the age of twenty. They had been brought up in the lap of wealth, but were truly conscientious and benevolent, and disposed to avail themselves of every means of improvement which presented themselves to their minds.

Both sexes suffer, and both alike fail of accomplishing the greatest amount of good, in human life, of which they have been made capable, when they are careless or lavish in their expenditures. It has, however, seemed to me that woman's influence, for good or for evil, was far more direct, and consequently more certain and permanent, than man's.

Familiar social intercourse, in the afternoon, in the domestic circle, — whatever else it left untaught, — could not fail to reveal to every one, who has his eyes open, the true character ; a result which a thousand mere balls and concerts, aided in their grand work of duplicity and concealment by various excitements, subsequent exclusion, and solitude, can never accomplish.

CHAPTER XXVI.

KNOWLEDGE OF HOUSEKEEPING.

“I WOULD not enter on my list of friends,” male or female, those that go so far as to despise, or profess to despise, *domestic* or home concerns, in any of their forms.

There was a time, in the history of our country, when neither our sons nor our daughters were ashamed of being domestic in their character. When a young woman took pains to exhibit the spinning-wheel and the distaff to her lover every time he made his appearance, it is not likely she, on the one hand, would have shrunk from the broom, and duster, and oven, and porridge-pot; or he from the shovel, the pruning-knife, the hoe, and the plough.

But “times are altered.” It is almost as much as a young man’s reputation is worth, to be caught in frock and trowsers, or a young woman’s to be caught at the plainer duties of housekeeping; especially if her dress should be in accordance with her employment. It would almost ruin her prospects — at least, in her own estimation — for this life, if not for the life which is to come.

Samuel Huntington and Captain K. were intimate acquaintances, at Norwich, Conn.; though the latter was much the oldest, and most respected. But a change came over them. Captain K. failed in business, and retired to Scotland, a parish of Windham, where on a small farm he spent the remainder of his days; while Mr. H. not only became Governor of the State, but was annually re-elected to that office till his death.

In his declining years he remembered his old friend, Capt. K.; and, attended by a single servant only, rode one day fourteen miles to see him. He was at a distance from the house, in frock and trowsers. His wife, knowing some great man had come to see him, took his Sunday suit of clothes, and went to him and begged him to make an exchange in the field. But Capt. K. better knew his business; and, with his Sunday suit under his arm, soon appeared in frock and trowsers before Gov. Huntington, with substantially the following speech:

“What I hold in my hands, dear sir, is my Sunday clothes, which my good wife, who is not acquainted with great folks, besought me to put on before I came in. But the Governor of Connecticut expects to find husbandmen in frock and trowsers. A pleasing incident has released me from the labors of the field to-day; and, when I have smoked my pipe, I will dress for the occasion.”

Now, this regard to external appearance before the great, of seventy-five or a hundred years ago, has

come to exist with reference to everybody. All are governors, and nobody must have on frock and trowsers, lest somebody should see them. All are governors now, and nobody must take hold of the distaff, broom, or duster, lest somebody should see them in a plight so shocking. If housework is done, it must either be done in a gay dress, and with the tips of the fingers; or we must invoke for aid the land of St. Patrick. And the more we consign our housework, and consequently our health and lives, to foreigners, the more is housework despised and detested by our wives, mothers, and daughters. I might say even more than this. The more housekeeping is done by proxy, the more is the plan of Jehovah — when he said, It is not good for man to be alone — rendered liable to defeat. It is not likely Eve had any hired help, — certainly it was not Bridget, or Katy, or Nelly, or Jemmy.

Dr. Johnson, a British writer of eminence, on health, says that many an important and well-planned military expedition has entirely failed because the general had in his stomach at the time of contest a bit of pickle. Sydney Smith says, "hard salted meat has led to suicide," and that "character, talents, virtues, and qualities are powerfully affected by beef, mutton, pie-crust, and rich soups." And thirteen out of fifteen persons at a boarding-house in Williamstown, in Mass., a few years ago, were made sick, and two of

them died, for want of a little good sense applied to housekeeping, especially to cookery.

But, if these things are so, and even if they are true with some abatement, it behooves the world to return to its good sense, and exalt housekeeping to the standing from whence it never should have departed. And, in order to this, the young must be trained to deem it honorable, and not despicable. In seeking out a helper for life, the love of housekeeping and the skill to practise it must be deemed among the more important qualifications. Not so much for the sake of the flavor of particular dishes, as on account of the dignity and feeling of independence which it really confers; and because it has a bearing, at once so striking and so strong, on health, virtue, and happiness.

Most heartily do I indorse the opinion of Dr. Johnson and Sydney Smith, that the contents of the human stomach have much to do with both the public and the private good. Of course, I entertain high hopes of cookery. Hitherto it has been ingloriously applied, even by Christian women, to gratify the appetite, rather than to promote real happiness, or add to health and longevity. One reason has been the want of proper information on the subject. Woman has not been taught that the old adage — God sends meats, but the devil sends cooks — has a foundation in truth, and must be reversed before the mind can be happy.

But a stronger reason, still, why woman has hitherto been permitted to minister, by cookery, to carnality and disease, is because she has no just ideas of the dignity of her station, and the responsibilities that devolve upon her. She does not realize that, in employing an Irish woman to cook for her, she is keeping the art of cookery stationary, by precluding motive to improvement; and promoting immorality, by precluding marriage. The Irish female, who is a helpmeet to her neighbor's husband, cannot be at the same time a helper to her *own* husband,—for husband, practically, or at least generally, she cannot have. And when one man is shut away from the privilege of having his own wife as a helper, one wife is deprived of the privilege of being aided as well as of aiding her own husband.

Most cheerfully do I admit that thousands do their housekeeping by proxy, and train their daughters, by example if not by precept, to do the same, who would shrink with the utmost horror at the idea of pursuing a course of conduct, in the family relation and circle, which should invite or in any way encourage licentiousness. But they do it. Whether it is not a crime of ignorance, that God will wink at and excuse, is a question I am not duly prepared to answer.

Much has been said, of late years, about the application of science—especially chemical science—to cookery. Little, however, has as yet been done. Cookery, as an art, makes no advances. Its motions

are all retrograde. Why is this? The old adage explains. This exceedingly important art has never been rescued from unworthy hands. Satan still rules. Nearly all the changes made by modern cookery, especially those which belong to fashionable life, minister to vice and disease. "Beef, mutton, pie-crust, and rich soups," not only powerfully affect character, and thus indirectly determine the health, the virtue, and the vice of mankind; but they do it directly. Peter Parley, in his Fireside Education, represents parents, especially mothers, as doing this with their eyes open.

Simple cookery promotes health, and virtue, and purity; just as complicated cookery has a reverse tendency. No man ever became an adulterer, or a fornicator, or an idolater, by eating simples, such as plain wheat, corn, rye, potatoes, rice, peas, beans, turnips, apples, chestnuts, pears, grapes, and currants, — boiled, baked, or parched, as the case may be, — without any addition. Whereas the addition of butter, lard, sugar, eggs, pepper, ginger, spices, saleratus, salt-tartar, and even common salt to our dishes, have led thousands and millions of every age, not only to vice and premature disease, but to that bourne whence no traveller returns.

If possible, then, find out for your associate in the matrimonial relation one who does not hate house-keeping. I do not say, look for one who loves it; for at this day such an expectation would be immoderate.

But seek out, at least, one who has no mortal or deadly hatred to this whole subject. And here, by the way, Christian courtship, as it should be called,—the rational intercourse of the young in circumstances which do not forbid access to the character as it is,—has an advantage which no artificial, conventional, hollow customs among us can secure.

It will be practically impossible for the young man or young woman who has open eyes, and a heart to use them, to spend half a dozen afternoons in the society of youthful acquaintances without finding out whether they detest housekeeping. At the home of the female herself, her own manner of doing things, or permitting them to be done, will determine whether she holds the distaff, like Solomon's virtuous woman, or whether she merely touches it with the ends of her fingers, and those protected with gloves. Nor will it be difficult to ascertain whether every idea of improvement in cookery and the other departments of housekeeping is hated, and given up to Bridget and Margaret. I do not say, that they who are in this condition are to be given up as incorrigibly unfit to be helpers in a world which does not contain one too many such; for there are redeeming qualities. One who is conscientious, benevolent, and decided, and has the love of progress, may perhaps be reformed. At all events, I should not wholly despair in such a case. Still it were better to start right, if possible, as I have repeatedly shown.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PHYSIOLOGICAL CHARACTER.

It has been partially admitted, in the beginning of this work, that, in a few particulars, the character of the husband and wife should be dissimilar. We are come, now, to the proper place for pointing out these particulars, and giving such directions as the case may require.

The doctrine of temperaments is not wholly a fiction. Mankind commence life with a physiological character, that may usually be referred to one or another of about five kinds or species. We have the sanguine, nervous, bilious, phlegmatic, and melancholic temperaments.

Thus, if a person has a ruddy complexion, with a fair, light-colored skin, light hair, and light or blue eyes, and firm flesh, we say he has a SANGUINE temperament. Sometimes, in the excess of this temperament, we have a sandy or reddish complexion, with the same kind of hair; and I have even seen the eyes of a reddish color, — like that of the Albino.

If the skin is brown, thick, and rough, and somewhat yellowish, especially beneath the eyes, with

brown or black hair and eyes, and rigid and strong, but not active muscles, we speak of the temperament as BILIOUS, or choleric.

When there is a large brain, with great sensibility and mobility, and a certain delicacy and slenderness of structure, which may be more easily conceived than described, with fair and light skin, hair, eyes, etc., it has obtained the name of the NERVOUS temperament.

The MELANCHOLIC temperament seems to be a modification of the sanguine or bilious temperament, induced either by disease or a diseased inheritance. The skin is dark, the countenance, especially about the eyes, sallow, and there is a general aspect of gloom or sadness or uneasiness. This is seldom seen in early life.

When the flesh is soft, the skin pale or watery, and the hair fair and soft, with a tendency of the system to fatness, we are accustomed to speak of the temperament as PHLEGMATIC, LYMPHATIC, or PITUITOUS. Sometimes, however, I have heard this called the ADIPOSE temperament.

But, when we say of an individual that he possesses such or such a temperament, we only mean that the temperament referred to predominates. There are no pure temperaments,—no person is purely sanguine, or bilious, or nervous. All are more or less of a mixed character. Individuals may even be found who take a *tinge* from them all.

The mental character is also believed to correspond, in some degree, to the physical conformation. Thus, the person of sanguine temperament has a large share of nervous susceptibility, together with the facility of passing rapidly from one idea to another. He has a quick conception, a ready memory, and a lively imagination.

The bilious or choleric person is said to have the passions violent and easily excited; the temper abrupt and impetuous; great firmness and inflexibility of character; boldness in the conception of projects, and untiring perseverance in their fulfilment. I might speak of other temperaments, but what has been said must suffice.

The temperaments in an individual are not only mixed, but greatly modified by climate, age, diseased tendencies, education, and various other influences. In the writer of these paragraphs, for instance, the sanguine and nervous temperaments greatly predominated in early life, especially the latter. But age, climate, and other circumstances, have imposed quite a shade of the bilious temperament, and diminished the sanguine.

The latter, moreover, often acquires a tinge from the bilious by employment, and I have known a tendency to plethora, and even to obesity, to be grafted upon nearly all the temperaments in later life; except, perhaps, the nervous and melancholic. And what is

done by age and climate and employment is still oftener the result of disease or of long-continued mental trials.

One thing more deserves notice. All the temperaments, in all their varied and endless combinations, — for really no two of us are alike, — are susceptible of being modified by education; and frequently are thus modified. Thus, a child of a high sanguine temperament may be kept at his studies till the nervous or even the melancholic temperament predominates; or a bilious or melancholic youth may be educated to some degree of the sanguine character. But the last change is not very common.

So great is the variety of character, from the first, and so striking the effect of education in changing first tendencies, and modifying what have usually been regarded as really original temperaments, that some few physiologists have rejected the whole doctrine as a mere superstition, — like palmistry, astrology, etc.

But, whether we reject the doctrine or not, one thing is certain, that all these varieties of constitution, either natural or acquired, exist, and have their influence, in greater or less degree, on intellectual and moral character. The practical inferences which should be made are also the same, whether we retain the doctrine of temperaments or reject it.

Now, in settling the preliminaries of matrimonial life, it is desirable that the young should understand

that a difference of predominating temperament in the sexes is not only admissible, but on many accounts highly desirable.

First. It is desirable because it is natural. For reasons¹ not known to the writer, and perhaps not known at all, the sanguine temperament of one sex often prefers the nervous of the opposite; and the bilious almost always so. I have seldom known the bilious female to manifest a preference for the bilious male. In short, I repeat, nature appears to have pointed to some degree of opposition in the two sexes.

I have expressed some surprise at this indication of nature. And yet there are analogies. The male of large features and stout frame seldom chooses the gigantic female; but almost always the individual of smaller or more slender form. The tall often prefer the short; the thin and nervous, the phlegmatic, etc. Is it strange, then, that the bilious men should prefer women of nervous temperament? Does not the Divine Unseen point in this direction? Or is the taste a fallen one?

Secondly. The results to our race, *as a race*, are most favorable, — at least, in our fallen and perverted condition, — when opposite temperaments are blended. There is less probability of disease, bodily or mental. There are fewer mental irregularities or eccentricities. In short, the posterity, other things and circumstances being equal, is more likely to be what it should be, in its progress and tendencies.

As a general thing, I should prefer the union of the bilious male with the sanguine and nervous and sanguine female; or the sanguine male with the bilious or melancholic female; or the phlegmatic male or female with the nervous and sanguine of the opposite sex.

But I say again, as before, that education may change the temperaments. I have no doubt that persevering effort may do much, even after the age of matrimony has arrived. And the young couple who should understand themselves, and the subject of this section, could not fail to do very much for each other during a protracted acquaintance prior to the consummation of their wishes and plans. So that the doctrine of temperaments, whether true or false, is an essential aid, and in no case a necessary hindrance, to connubial happiness, and to particular and general usefulness.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HEALTH.

WHEN I set down health as an indispensable qualification for the marriage state, it is not without misgivings. Nobody, it will be said, forgets this, since none who are sick presume to marry. Such, at least, is said to be the general rule; and one to which there are few exceptions.

I grant that the severely sick seldom, if ever, marry. Yet, nothing is more common, as every one knows who will but for a moment reflect, than for people to marry who are, one or the other of them, affected with chronic complaints. In these days, few among us are without some chronic ill, hereditary or acquired; and, if none of this class were to marry, Hymen would have very few worshippers.

The doctrine is sometimes held that, considered in the abstract, there is no such thing as perfect health physically, any more than morally. But this is a view which, though it may be correct physiologically and philosophically, is in ordinary conversation seldom taken.

In the usual view of the case, a few among us may

be regarded as healthy. They eat, drink, sleep, labor and amuse themselves, and know no interruption, and never knew any. If the number of such who have attained to a suitable age for matrimonial life is very few, yet there certainly is such a class.

To such, the direction is simple and easy. Seek out a person as healthful, if possible, as yourself. Nevertheless, as the vast majority of both sexes are diseased, and therefore, as a result, it must happen either that few can marry, or else a portion of those who do marry must be of those who are diseased, the consequences to the race would not be very serious if to one very healthy individual another were united who was slightly affected with disease. Such a selection, on your own part, would still give you an average prospect of happiness. In truth, I suppose the average of the healthy, strictly so, would not be more than a tenth.

But what shall be done, it may be asked, with those whose choice falls strongly on individuals who are affected, in greater or less degree, with some chronic affection, such as scrofula, neuralgia, dyspepsia, or consumption? Shall they venture on marriage?

Much depends in all these cases on circumstances, to be duly considered. Suppose, for example, your choice has fallen on a young friend, whose family is consumptive, and whose own constitution is beginning to incline that way. You believe, perhaps, that it is not too late for restoration in the individual; but you

have regard — and ought to have — to the probable effects on progeny. In these circumstances, what will you do?

Consider well your own health, and that of your family. You are not consumptive; but is there any taint of the disease in your family? Or of scrofula which so often leads to it? If there is but the slightest tendency in that direction, beware. But if otherwise, you may, perhaps, venture to go forward.

The union of insanity with insanity must be avoided with at least equal solicitude. More than even this. Insanity, and every manifest tendency in that direction, should avoid a union with any striking family eccentricity in manners, — such as is not unfrequently found in our families. In other words, where the slightest tendency to insanity appears, on one side, there should be the most perfect soundness on the other.

It is somewhat the same with neuralgia and dyspepsia, but not so strikingly, — especially the latter. I ought, however, to say of the latter, and of all harassing, distressing, and debilitating diseases which keep an individual for a long time at what I have called the bottom of his condition, that they are apt to impart a consumptive tendency to the offspring. It is this cause more than any — perhaps all — others, which is manufacturing consumption in our country at a rate so fearfully rapid. ●

The general idea to be kept in view, is, that since a matrimonial union of two perfectly healthy persons

is and must necessarily be a rare case, while in general one, at least, of the parties must be more or less diseased, or of diseased tendencies, it is exceedingly desirable to form those connections which are least likely to produce, either directly or remotely, any unhappy consequences.

There are, however, many things to be thought of in this connection, which bear upon the health, besides serious and dangerous disease, either in progress or incipency.

Thus, suppose a young man is enslaved to the habit of using tobacco. It is not the foulness of the habit, alone, that is to be considered by the other party; nor yet its expensiveness; but its tendency to invite or aggravate disease. You are in a world where disease will be apt to overtake you fast enough, in single or in married life, after you have done the best you can to avoid and avert it. Take care, then, not to be the willing instrument of laying a foundation for it, in the constitution of the family.

Some, I know, are so ignorant of the laws of health as not to know that the use of tobacco has any such tendency. I have seen a man who had used it forty years; and who boldly and unblushingly asked me what harm it could possibly have done him. The man, though not sick, was evidently bilious and nervous.

But suppose otherwise. Suppose he had wholly escaped sickness for forty years. Suppose, still fur-

ther, his biliary system had been perfectly sound. Was there no injury done? Was no evil tendency transmitted to any of his children? Was there no wrong in running the risk he had run during this long period?

Perhaps you do not know what I mean by *running risk*, all this time,—such is the public ignorance. Then I must explain. My meaning is just this. A tobacco chewer or smoker, who gets sick, is likely to be more severely sick, especially of acute disease, in proportion to the strength and permanency of his unnatural habit; and the disease is more likely to be unmanageable and fatal.

This principle, by the way, is applicable to all wrong habits, especially all that pertain to the reception into our systems of any thing, solid, liquid, or æriform, which is more or less medicinal or poisonous. Thus, not only rum and tobacco, but opium, arsenic, wine, cider, ale, beer, coffee, tea, carbonic acid, and many things I could name, which are used in our daily food, and, without great care, are daily and hourly inhaled, such as saleratus, pepper, mustard, carburetted hydrogen, sulphuretted hydrogen, etc., have the same tendency and effect.

Should some, who have never received any information on this subject, be led to inquire how these things can be, I reply that, though this is not the place for the discussion of such a topic, I will just say that all these things are unnatural to the human constitu-

tion ; and, as surely as they are used, tend to derange, more or less, its machinery. In other words, we are more or less poisoned. So that, when fever, or cholera, or any other dangerous disease, fastens on us, the system being already crippled by long poisoning, or at least long irritation, is unfitted to withstand the diseased tendencies, and more readily succumbs. It is even true, that the disease is more likely to fasten on such persons in the first place. And then, again, the attending physician, not knowing how far the unnatural habit which has been so long formed has taken the system from its normal condition, can hardly judge about the size and strength of his doses ; and is quite as likely to aggravate the disease, in his efforts, as to do good.

These are great truths, and should be everywhere known ; but especially by those who are proposing to enter into matrimonial life. She who weds a tobacco chewer or smoker, no less than he who weds a gigantic tea or coffee drinker or saleratus eater, should “look out for breakers.” Those who are not addicted to any habits of this sort, if any such persons there be, may possibly have epidemic diseases when they come along, because they may be prepared, or predisposed, if not excited, by other causes, — of which, in civic life, there are many, — but those who *are* thus addicted are much more certain of being afflicted, as well as of being, in a peculiar degree, sufferers.

What, then, it may be said, are the genuine attach-

ments of the human soul—for it is not the body we love so much as the spirit—to be laid aside for such considerations as these? Not exactly laid aside; certainly not overlooked, or wholly neglected. But they are to be modified. If I were a young woman, and were ardently attached to the best young man in the world, as I verily supposed, but should, of a sudden, discover that he used opium as a habitual stimulus, I should hesitate. I should be in duty bound to do so. If the stimulus were rum, the duty of consideration—perhaps of recession—would be acknowledged. But what if men do not get drunk on opium? Is it nothing to use an article that exposes a person to disease, and then by contact exposes the rest of the family, and at the same time renders their diseases more fatal in themselves, and less manageable by the physician? Love, indeed, is blind and deaf; but the head has eyes and ears, as well as other senses; and there should be enthroned somewhere both reason and conscience.

There are still other habits which will invite disease, and which, other things being equal, should be set down as disqualifying us for matrimony. A young man whom I know objects to going to school a long distance, because he thereby loses his warm dinner. Now, I would not marry a young man or a young woman, if I were to live again fifty lives, who was so enslaved to hot food as to forego any thing very valuable for its sake. It is not that the warm

dinner, in itself, is very objectionable; but the fastidious delicacy of such a stomach is an excellent preparation for disease, and will be likely, sooner or later, to invite it. Besides, it usually indicates a low tone of moral energy.

I have seen a teacher come in from his school-room, at twelve o'clock of a warm summer day, and put his feet in almost close contact with a bed of coals, and sit there "toasting them" for a long time. And yet those persons, of both sexes, who warm their feet, are among the last to *have* warm feet. Their extremities, in fact, are almost always cold. In winter or summer, I have not for very many years placed my feet at the stove or fireplace to warm them.

It is not the warming the feet that does the mischief,—though even that renders us more likely than before to take cold,—so much as the habit of babying ourselves. They who warm their feet at the stove in July, will do a thousand other silly things; and will be found to have something always ail them. Their moral courage and energy will also be doubtful in proportion.

You must study closely, in this particular, the character of those with whom you associate, and with whom you feel as if you must be, for life, united, or be miserable. For you will most certainly be miserable when yoked together with an "unbeliever" in the laws of health. But he is no believer, who cannot trust his feet to exercise and a little patience, or his stomach with a dinner which is not exactly smoking.

A woman of my acquaintance used to say to her family and the hired men, "I don't want my dinner, if I can't have it smoking." Yet that very individual, despite of a strong constitution and excellent habits in general, was not satisfied with a smoking dinner, but must have a stimulating one. Then she went to something else which smoked, besides her dinner,—I mean, the tobacco-pipe. And now, for nearly twenty years, she has been a sufferer from stomach and heart complaints.

You see, therefore, how important it is to look out for health. Especially should you look out and avoid those who are always attending to themselves,—their feet, their stomachs, their eyes, their hands, etc. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others," is about as good an injunction in hygiene, as it is in morals and religion.

It has been said that we should never know, by our feelings, that we have any stomach, liver, lungs, or other internal organs. The remark needs qualification. Parents should so train their children, and we should all so manage ourselves, by constant obedience to all moral and physical law, that all will go on right, and then we may proceed without seeming to know any thing about it.

Most of our young women of the present day are enslaved to the habit of warming their feet, warming their stomachs, supporting their backs, bracing their

lungs, or childishly indulging themselves in some way. How few there are who are enlightened on the subject of hygiene, so as to avoid disease themselves, or be helpers to others who would gladly act in the same manner.

They who contemplate the married life, and enter into it not only for duty's sake, but for the sake of its happiness, do not wish to have their attention continually drawn to the bodily ailments of those whom they love. Nor do they wish to have those whom they love, better perhaps than themselves, liable to frequent attacks of disease, — ready, by reason of their folly, to catch, as it were, every thing of the kind that comes along, from a cold to cholera, — and be dreadfully sick with it. We do not like to sit at the bedside of the sick, night and day, and be dependent on physicians and apothecary shops. Nor do we like to see the younger members of our families go down to the silent grave, just as they have passed life's threshold, as the consequence of parental errors that might have been foreseen and avoided.

Need I add to what has already been said, by way of caution, that one advantage you may possibly derive, from a familiar acquaintance with the families of those whom you love, will be that of studying out their tendencies as to health? For, if you chance to find an apothecary's shop in the pantry, or anywhere within the sanctuary of home, beware lest it has had

an influence which would be as fatal to your happiness as it would be to your peace.

Leonora had one of those careful mothers, who can never do quite enough for their daughters till they have spoiled their constitutions. For fear she would never have any *constitution*, she begun to dose her at fourteen, and continued it to twenty-four. Then she was married, but she did not cease to take medicine. Perhaps her husband might have hoped to reform her ; but, alas ! he kept an apothecary's shop, and the influence was all in the opposite direction. He himself became an invalid ; and his wife went from bad to worse. The more he relied on medicines, — bitters, powders, pills, etc., — the more he seemed to need them. Though they always cured him most wonderfully, yet he soon found it necessary to resort to them again. His wife had about as good an assortment in the pantry as he had in the shop, and she used it, if possible, with more freedom. And while her husband could sit up nearly all day, she could only sit up half of it. And, as for family, no children survived birth more than two weeks ; and most perished more than two weeks still earlier.

Thus things went on, till, by means which I have not now room to give, all was reversed. They were thrown on their own resources, and stripped of all their false dependencies. In ten years they had tol-

erable health, with a family of one or two comparatively healthy children.

This is an extreme case ; but may serve as an example of what has been, and what may again be. Reader, do you like it ? If not, look well to your steps beforehand. For I ask again, as I did before,—

“ Who would not give a trifle to prevent

What he would give a thousand worlds to cure ? ”

CHAPTER XXIX.

INTELLECTUAL QUALIFICATIONS.

THIS topic has not been deferred solely because it was deemed of little importance, but for various reasons ; chiefly, however, because most persons have an eye to this, and most writers make provision to meet it, which renders its discussion less necessary. However, I have a few thoughts to present, even here.

So fashionable is it to do every thing for the intellect, and nothing, or almost nothing, for the body, or for the formation of character, that not a few are disposed to speak of the cultivation of the intellect, to the neglect of the head and the heart, as the great error of modern education. This is just as I regard it.

It is not true that mankind are made better in proportion as they are enlightened. It is hardly true of the world generally ; it is far enough from being true of the individual. Satan himself is said to have been, on one occasion, transformed into an angel of light ; but we do not hear that he was made better

by the transformation. He was, in all probability, Satan still.

And yet, despite of this consideration that neither men nor women are necessarily good in proportion to their enlightenment, few of us will consent to associate with the ignorant. We are ignorant enough ourselves; why should we consent to be let down any lower? Besides, we are fond of intelligence, — the most ignorant of us, — especially in our nearest and most familiar connections. What mortifies us more than a fool in the family? And what would be more painful than a life union with such a being?

But, however this may be with the parties themselves, of one thing we may be certain, which is, that a good intellect, where every thing else is as it should be, is exceedingly desirable. As it renders a bad man or woman as much worse as their elevation is greater, so it elevates in the same proportion the good. If Satan is still more Satan while changed to an angel of light, Gabriel is still more Gabriel in proportion as he towers among angels and archangels, amid the hosts of heaven.

Man is not made to live solely, or even principally, on bread and fruits and meats. He belongs, in his higher nature, to another kingdom, — one which is righteousness and peace and joy. Man is made to eat angels' food, as well as man's. In other words, he is made to eat intellectually and spiritually, no less than bodily or physically; and he can no more grow intellectually, without food, than physically.

Now, intellectual cultivation, if what it should be, not only imparts an appetite for mental food, but teaches how to supply it. It gives us the keys to unlock the treasury of knowledge, and disposes us to make search. If such is not the result, it is a misnomer. It is as unworthy of the individual, and as poorly supplies his real intellectual wants, as sawdust or ashes would his physical.

Not a little of what is called intellectual cultivation, in these days, is far better entitled to the name of intellectual stupefaction. Instead of teaching to think or reason, it teaches us *not* to think and reason. It gives us rules and facts, but not the power to find out facts for ourselves, and put our own constructions on them, or apply to them our own rules. Hence it is deemed, by many, hollow; and by all, superficial. Hence, too, the almost universal prejudice which is got up, in the minds of a certain class who have no other way to make capital, against all education. Hence, too, the disposition to denounce all cultivation of the mind, and all the machinery for this purpose, as useless, or even as criminal.

Dr. Franklin, in some of his essays, relates an anecdote, which illustrates this subject. An Indian, in the early days of our country, came to one of our infant settlements to sell his furs, especially some choice skins of beaver. It was on Saturday; and, as he did not succeed in effecting a sale before the Sabbath came on, he was requested to wait in the

village till Monday, and they would then converse further with him. The Indian consented to wait, though without fully understanding the reasons why.

On Sunday, the good people attended church, and the Indian, excited by curiosity, also went in. What they aimed at, he could not divine. He, however, began to suspect at length that it was a conference of the people about the price of beaver, especially as he saw the speaker and others occasionally looking at him. On Monday, when he again introduced his beaver-skins, he found that, for some reason or other, they would not give him as good a price as they had offered on Saturday. His suspicions were now confirmed. "Ah," said he, "I now see what the people assembled together for. It was to contrive to cheat the Indians in the price of beaver."

All ignorant people have, in greater or less degree, this same feeling. And it is owing to the fact, at least in part, that our progress in excellence is seldom commensurate with our progress in knowledge, that the masses, who are always, by comparison, the ignorant, have imbibed the prejudice referred to, and practically rejected all education and all schools. Or, if they send their children to them, it is often as a mere choice of evils, or in compliance with fashion; and perhaps nearly as often to keep them out of the way.

But, if our schools are what they should be, — if they require the pupils to attend to *things* rather than

names, — if they teach to reason, and especially to reason from effect to cause, — if they make the young not only learned in facts, but inventive, observing, and well disciplined, and even well disposed, — then we can hardly have too many schools or too much intellectual cultivation.

One large item in the cup of connubial happiness is its conversation. I have seen married people who had lived together seventy or eighty years; and great multitudes who had lived together fifty years. What an amount of conversation may be had during such a long period! And would it add nothing to our happiness that this conversation was intelligent conversation? Is there no difference between the bliss which is imparted when Gabriel and Raphael hold sweet converse, and that which is afforded by the unintelligent conversation of two native Hottentots or two American Indians?

Intellectual cultivation, therefore, in itself considered, and when made a wise use of, is an important marriage qualification. It need not be that of the schools; though I hold that it is not to be despised merely because it came from the schools, provided it is intellectual cultivation in reality. People may be truly learned in spite of the schools, and I doubt not many are so.

But, though I would regard a well-stored, or rather a well-disciplined, mind, as an important matrimonial qualification, I would never be led by its glitter and

show, to overlook other and more needful qualifications. Conscientiousness, benevolence, love of home, and of the young, with love of progress, and many other moral qualifications, are of so much more value than mere learning, that the latter hardly deserves to be named on the same day with them.

The prejudice against learning has had an existence, even among the more intelligent, in one of its forms. A learned female has been frequently regarded as an object of contempt, at least so far as her preparation for marriage is concerned. I do not suppose one learned man in a thousand would be likely to marry a learned woman. Who, for example, would have married Hannah More? Yet she was a paragon of excellence. Such women, indeed, often marry, but not to learned men.

I do not think this prejudice should be sustained by the wise and good; though I do not deny that some few of the class, to whom I refer, have been little more than mere pedants. But, as a class, I know not that the charge of being pedantic or opinionated, or, above all, masculine, could be well sustained. In truth, I think the feeling is gradually wearing away, and that it will ultimately be found that there are about as many male pedants in the country as female; and that mere literary qualifications, in male or female, do not disqualify for marriage those whom nature has qualified in other respects; but that the contrary would be nearer the general truth.

CHAPTER XXX.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

THE prejudice against accomplishments is much stronger than that which exists against those branches of learning which are more generally regarded as needful. Reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, philosophy, astronomy, botany, and chemistry, are more seldom, in these days, objected to; and only a few object to the remaining branches which usually come under the name of English branches. But, when we come to the study of the languages, living and dead, with drawing, needle-work, music, painting, dancing, riding, fencing, etc., there is a good deal of demurring.

Nor is it to be denied that the rage for accomplishments has led many of our schools to give them so prominent a place as to hold the more useful and practical branches in abeyance, and confirm a feeling in the public mind which it were desirable to remove, if possible, rather than strengthen. It is, as I think, in female schools, more than in any other, that this error has been committed. And, hence, perhaps, the

charge of pedantry, to which I made a passing allusion in the last chapter.

One branch, usually denominated a mere accomplishment, seems to me as worthy of being classed with the necessary and useful, as many others to which no objection has ever been made. Drawing is as useful, for aught I know, as arithmetic or geography. Who does not have daily or almost daily occasion for sketching some object in nature, — a plant, a flower, a bird, or a dwelling? And to whom, of either sex, is not such an acquirement nearly or quite indispensable?

I grant the difficulty of making a line of demarcation between the useful and the polite, or between necessities and accomplishments. The luxuries of to-day, everywhere in life, and in every thing, become the necessities of to-morrow; and the time has hardly passed by in which drawing was deemed a mere luxury, — seldom, if ever, a real necessary. Still, there is a line of distinction somewhere.

On music, too, I might make a few remarks, not dissimilar to those which I have ventured concerning drawing. So important has vocal music been regarded, that the public voice has very generally approved of its introduction to our common schools. It is instrumental music alone, which is, in these days, to be regarded as a mere accomplishment. And yet I like it, especially for females. Its expense is the strongest objection to its general use, especially among females.

But it is certainly less important to everybody than drawing.

It is quite possible that instrumental music ought to be reserved for a future period in the history of the world, when the arts shall have made greater progress. Some allowance is certainly to be made for the age in which we live, and for the advancement of society. As it is right for me to have books now which would once have been an unpardonable luxury, so it may be right for coming generations to possess things which it would be wrong for the present generation to make use of. Such, it strikes me, may be the fact with regard to instrumental music. It is exceedingly desirable; but I suspect it to be one of those luxuries which God, in his Providence, did not intend for a majority of the generation now on the stage of action.

But vocal music need not be denied us; and, thanks to a kind Providence, is not generally so. Few, in these days, are to be found who cannot sing. Not that all can sing equally well; for all cannot *read* equally well. Still, as surely as everybody can read, better or worse, everybody can sing.

The art of singing, in some sort, small a matter as it may seem, is one of those things that may be justly deemed indispensable to connubial happiness. I would not advise a young woman to marry a man who had "no music in his soul." The very domestic animals seem to be happier under the direction and

guidance of a farmer who can and does sing and whistle among them, than under that of one who is always silent. Still more applicable is the remark to the case of a father among his children. This is not mere fancy work; it has a foundation in truth and nature.

But, if it is important for the husband to sing, it is much more so for the wife to do so. Her hum, from time to time, not only cheers the husband and all others connected with the family, but, in a particular manner, the children. Those families that have a singing mother, and the domestics—if domestics we must have in our families—that have a singing mistress, will be quite different in their character from those in whom there is no music from morning to evening.

- Young men may smile when I tell them that a singing wife is indispensable to the happiness of conjugal life. But it is one thing to smile, and quite another to despise. I have a friend in one of our manufacturing cities, who would have smiled, thirty years ago, at such a remark. Yet let me relate a fact concerning this very young man.

His lot was to marry a young woman of feeble constitution, and yet not so feeble but that she sometimes sung. After a few years, however, her song ceased. If there was music in her soul, it did not come out. My friend now saw the difference; and, like one who waits patiently, during the darkness of

the long night, for the first rays of the morning, he waited for the return of his wife's wonted vivacity and cheerfulness. Day at length came. On asking him, on a certain occasion, how his wife did, he replied: "Better, much better; thank God, she sings again."

Reader, whoever you are, be sure to marry one who can sing. She should sing *well*, if possible; but, at any rate, she should sing. And, as far as in your power, so treat her that she may be *disposed* to do what God has given her power to do, and what adds so much to domestic happiness.

Of needle-work, as an accomplishment, — I mean, of course, the fashionable needle-work of the day, — I have little to say: first, because I know very little about it; secondly, because I doubt its usefulness. It can never be healthful, — it may always be dispensed with. It is not like drawing. That is not very healthy (though less unhealthy than painting), but it is so exceedingly useful that it must be retained and encouraged in spite of its unhealthiness.

But what shall I say of dancing as an accomplishment? Its exceeding healthfulness — not to say its naturalness — always strikes me favorably. There are, indeed, many prejudices against it, in the minds of good people, but they seem to me either local or mistaken. The perversion of a thing, when that perversion is not inherent in its nature, is not to be set to the thing itself. The fact that dancing has been abused, and made to minister to vice and irre-

ligion, is not by any means proof positive that its use should be forever abandoned.

For some young people,—and I might say old ones too,—of both sexes, dancing is exceedingly useful. And yet, I would not have much time spent in its acquisition. It is with dancing somewhat as with singing. Much may be done without a master. There are families that sing by rote, as it were, so that the instruction which is given in the district schools, joined to that which is given incidentally in the family, may almost suffice us. Thus I judge it to be with regard to dancing. We may learn to dance in the family. And what is not there learned, if it cannot come in at the schools, in the way of amusement merely, and without the formality of set lessons, special hours, and established fees, may be omitted.

As to dancing in the night,—I mean at unseasonable hours, and all hours are unseasonable beyond the hours usually allotted to retiring,—I hardly need to add a word. No one will believe I could say a word in its favor. In truth, it has not so much as one redeeming attribute.

Riding, by which I mean, of course, riding on horseback, has become very generally regarded as an accomplishment; but I am, as a whole, opposed to it. Very little is gained by it, as a means of developing or cultivating the muscular system, beyond what may be attained by other exercises, especially walk-

ing and dancing; and it stands opposed to certain general rules, based on a sacred regard to humanity, such as, never to ride when we can as well walk; and to be merciful to brute animals. If I were a slaveholder, and lived in a slave country, I would by all means have my children and friends taught to ride on horseback. Indeed, I would favor every thing which would foster and increase that love of power and possession on which slavery, in its spirit, rests as its needful, and, I fear, ever-enduring pillars.

That there may be exceptions to this rule, as to most other general rules, is certainly possible; but I think they are not numerous. Horses, except iron horses, are going out of fashion; and it would be idle to spend much time in riding a horse that is so soon, in the history of the world, to be reckoned among the things that were. The time may not be far distant when horses will be fewer than balloons; and perhaps fewer, even, than elephants.

Fencing has some recommendations which riding does not possess; but I think the far greater part of this should be done with the pruning-knife, hoe, spade, plow, etc. Indeed, it is not easy for one to preserve his wonted gravity when he hears good people at the present day attempting to defend such things as riding and fencing, as accomplishments, that require masters and teachers at fixed salaries.

They, at all events, who cannot enter into the realms of conjugal life without feeling that these arts

are indispensable qualifications or pre-requisites to happiness, while there, will do well to defer the consideration of the whole subject, and take a few lessons in other departments, especially in the science of good sound sense.

And yet, in summing up what I have to say under the head of accomplishments, I have to confess that I think two of the more important of these need not be obtained at the higher and more expensive schools of our fashionable days. They are, or might be, far more accessible. They should be had at every district school.

Reading is the first of these. Though a necessary of life, it is also an accomplishment, and one of no ordinary magnitude. It contributes largely to the happiness of all married life which is elevated much above the brute. Where the family consists of the husband and wife only, it has sometimes seemed to me to contribute more than all else to fill the cup of domestic bliss. One man whom I knew, being too lazy to work more than half his time, when not compelled from necessity, and too proud to be seen lounging, spent almost half his waking hours reading to his wife.

Some young families have adopted a course of readings for mutual improvement; and, by perseverance in this plan, have done themselves great good. Others have gone still further, and changed their readings into set lessons, on the plan, or somewhat after the

plan, of M. Jacotot, of Louvain in Europe, whose great principle was, that "all is contained in all." In other words, he required his pupils to start somewhere and proceed onward, retaining all they acquired. It made little difference where they started.

Thus, suppose they set out with our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount. They have, at first, to commit a small portion at the beginning — say one verse — to memory; viz. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Every scholar — without book or pen or paper, fixes this in his mind, after which they proceed to analyze it, comment upon it, etc.; somewhat as follows:

What is it to be blessed? How do you spell the word *blessed*? Who are blessed? By whom are they blessed? or from whom does the blessing come? What is spirit? How do you spell the word? Who are the poor in spirit? Do you know of any such? Is there any other poverty in the world beside poverty of spirit? What is a kingdom? What is here meant by the kingdom of Heaven? Who said this? Where was he when he said it? In what part of the world? Which way from us? About how far? How long ago? To whom was it said? How does it concern us, in these days? — Let each one of you write down the sentence on your slates, in a good plain hand. Let every one read it aloud.

Now, here, in this simple exercise, are, or may be, taught spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, gram-

mar, geography, history, religion, and almost every thing else. The question, for example, *when* the sermon was preached, is historical. The question of locality is geographical. The question about distance is arithmetical. And so on.

In due time they add another verse: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." But observe, I say, they *add*. They do not take a new lesson, and drop the old one. That is kept, also; and repeated whenever the other is. So it is at every step of their progress. They are allowed to proceed no faster than they can, and at the same time analyze every thing contained in what they meet, and thus verify the doctrine that "all is in all"; nor faster than they can retain and repeat, with the utmost exactness, every thing they have learned.

I do not like a large share of the reading of our families, at present. Thousands of our best people make the mistake of filling their houses, as it were, with books which, though they may not be directly immoral in tendency, are little less than immoral in the end. Because they find them in the circulating or village library, and because everybody reads them and talks about them, — and not to be able to talk about them, *i. e.* not to keep up, in this respect, with the times, would be almost a sin unpardonable against King Fashion, — they read them. They have much the same effect on the mental apparatus, and the results of mentality, which pies and cakes and highly exciting

food in general have on the stomach and digestive organs, and through them on the blood and the general system. Though not directly bad, they are so, remotely, to an extent of which very few are aware.

While, therefore, reading and the love of reading is an accomplishment greatly to be desired and looked for, by all who propose to enter the marriage relation, let me recommend to you to avoid, if you can, such reading as this. Do not enlist, at all events, when nothing is relished but that which is highly spiced and otherwise seasoned. Fly from the ordinary slavery to the modern system of light and merely entertaining reading, as you would from the plague, or the small pox, or the yellow fever.

This plan, I say, or something like it, is sometimes adopted as a means of advancement in the family; but this plan need not wholly preclude others. One young family that I know reads a page, every day, of Webster's large Dictionary, with all the definitions.

The other of the two cheap accomplishments referred to is the art of conversation. I think this ought to be made a prominent study in all our schools. Except biography, I know of none more important, in addition to the present stock, that could be introduced. But, if not taught in the schools, it can be acquired somewhere, and should be, — ay, and must be. The social meetings of the young might do much towards securing this highly important art. How much would it beautify, cheer, and benefit in the mar-

ried state! As a pre-requisite to matrimonial life, its importance can hardly be over-estimated.

Did reading and conversation, considered as mere accomplishments, receive but a tithe of the attention they richly deserve, many of the hours of matrimonial life, that now seem tedious and monotonous, might be rendered among the most gladsome of our lives. Besides this, not a few of those wanderings and loungings and absences, — to call them by a name no worse, — that are now construed into neglect and nourished into suspicion, perhaps jealousy or alienation, would be prevented, to the great benefit of the parties concerned, as well as the rest of the world.

And yet, taking accomplishments as a whole, and especially in the popular sense of the term, as restricted to music, drawing, painting, the languages, dancing, riding, and the like, I must say, I could greatly prefer that a mill-stone were hanged about their neck, and that they were cast into the depth of the sea, than that so much stress should be laid upon them as is usual in these days, especially in fashionable life. Better there were no schools at all beyond good, substantial, well-cared-for public schools, than that the mass of our citizens should be compelled to pay two or three hundred dollars a year to have their daughters, and their sons, too, — but especially the former, — acquire a disrelish for all that made the last generation but one or two, happy and useful to an ex-

tent not yet known by any of its successors; and a fondness for that which better becomes butterflies and glow-worms than beings made in the image of God, and intended, ere long, to be members of his special household.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FILIAL PIETY.

MY notions of filial piety, as a pre-requisite to matrimony, may be gathered from the following paragraphs, which I borrow from Addison,—with a little variation, to suit my own taste,—merely remarking that I do not mean to indorse the determination of his heroine, not to marry during his life. Why should she not marry, and take her venerable and beloved father to dwell with her, under her own roof? Such, I think, should have been her conclusion,—such, I think, in the nature of things, it must have become. Scarcely less strange than her own was her father's desire on this subject, even though in his second childhood.

“Fidelia,” says he, “is the only child of a decrepit father, whose life is bound up in her. This gentleman has used Fidelia, from her infancy, with all the tenderness imaginable, and has viewed her growing perfections with the partiality of a parent who soon thought her accomplished above the children of all other men, though he never thought she was come to the highest pitch of improvement of which she was

capable. This fondness has had very pleasing effects upon her own happiness ; for she reads, sings, dances, and uses her spinet and guitar to the utmost perfection. And this young lady's use of all these excellencies is to divert the old man, in his easy-chair, when he is out of the pangs of a chronic distemper.

"Fidelia is now in the twenty-third year of her age ; but the application of many admirers, her quick sense of all that is elegant and noble, or the enjoyment of a plentiful fortune, are not able to draw her from the side of her good old father. Certain it is that there is no sort of affection so pure and angelic as that of a father to a daughter.

"Fidelia, on her part, as accomplished as she is, with all her beauty, wit, air, and mien, employs her whole time in care and attendance upon her father. How have I been charmed to see one of the most beauteous women of the age kneeling to help on an old man's slipper ! Her filial regard to him is what she makes her diversion, her business, and her glory.

"When she was asked by a friend of her deceased mother to admit the courtship of her son, she replied, that she had a great respect and gratitude to her for the overtures on behalf of one so near to her ; but that, during her father's life, she would admit into her heart no value for any thing that should interfere with her endeavors to make his remains of life as happy and easy as could be expected in her circumstances. And the happy father has her declaration that she

will not marry during his life, and the pleasure of seeing that resolution not uneasy to her.

“Were one to paint filial affection in its utmost beauty, he could not have a more lively idea of it, than in beholding Fidelia serving her father at his hours of rising, meals, and rest.

“While the general crowd of female youth are consulting their glasses, preparing for balls, assemblies, or plays, for a young lady who could be regarded among the foremost in these places, either for her person, wit, fortune, or conversation, and yet contemn all these entertainments to sweeten the heavy hours of a decrepit parent, is a resignation truly heroic.

“Fidelia performs the duty of a nurse with all the beauty of a bride; nor does she neglect her person because of her attendance upon him when he is too ill to receive company, to whom she may make an appearance. In giving up to her father her youth she does not think it any sacrifice to add to it the spoiling of her dress. Her care and exactness in her habit convince her father of the alacrity of her mind; and she has, of all women, the best foundation for affecting the praise of a seeming negligence.

“Those who think themselves the pattern of good-breeding and refinement, would be astonished to hear that, in those intervals when the old gentleman is at ease, and can bear company, there are at his house, in the most regular order, assemblies of people of the highest merit, when there is conversation without

mention of the absent, and when the highest subjects of morality are treated of as natural and accidental discourse; all of which is owing to the genius of Fidelia, who at once makes her father's way to another world easy, and herself capable of being an honor to his name in *this*."

I grant, indeed,—and Mr. Addison would doubtless be ready to make a similar concession,—that, if there were more Fidelia's fathers in the world, there would be more Fidelias. But, even now, as the world is, there are those that approximate to the standard of character exhibited in both the father and the daughter. And when such filial piety as Fidelia's shall enter within the pale of matrimonial life much oftener than the world may begin to hope for a glorious day.

CHAPTER XXXII.

PIETY TOWARD GOD.

THE remarkable fact that more females than males make public profession of the love of God, has been construed into an argument against religion itself. Not, of course, by the thinking; but by the multitude who do *not* think. A most singular construction! To me it is one of woman's highest commendations, and one of the strongest arguments in favor of the truth and divinity of the religion which we profess. If it addressed itself to our rougher, coarser, less virtuous, and less refined sex, so that in almost all countries more men received it than women, — often in the proportion of two or three to one, — it would lead my mind to suspicion.

This remark and concession take for granted, I know, that woman is of finer material, and is more virtuous and elevated — or at least less fallen — by nature than man; but is this, after all, any thing more than a repetition of the verdict which has been pronounced by the wise and good, of all ages, concerning her? I do not say, of course, that she is naturally pious; but only that, being fallen, like the other sex,

—perhaps as truly divested of all love of God or men as they,—she is yet so constructed that she receives the invitation to return to the path whence she has strayed with more readiness, and with a heartier welcome.

Nothing can be more rational than the idea of a relation between the creature and the Creator, even though revelation had been wholly silent on the subject. If God made me, and life is worth any thing, I am under obligation to him. If the gift of life, to begin with,—if one year of existence—places me under obligation, an existence of two years increases that obligation, and so on. The longer I am preserved in that desirable life, the greater is my indebtedness. And, now, shall I neither make, nor desire to make, any return? Shall a kind Father not only make me, but for years and tens—it may be scores—of years sustain me, and shall I act, and speak, and think as if I had no father but an earthly one?

Our young men, much more than our young women, of modern times, affect to be greatly sceptical. They laugh at religion and the church; and particularly at woman, for what they call her weakness in so readily laying hold on the “horns of the altar.” Just as one might expect, say they, from “the weaker vessel.”

But do these young men know what they are talking about? Are they quite sincere on their part? Do they really doubt the reality of serious things as strongly as they pretend? Or if, from time to time, they

have doubts, have they not, on the other hand, many misgivings? They must pardon me, when I tell them, from experience,—having once been a young man myself,—that I know how to answer the question for them. “In the hour of distress, my heart as naturally flies to the Deity for succor, as, when hungry or thirsty, I seek food and water, and when weary, repose.”

I do not take the stand of the preacher of the gospel, but that of the rational man merely, when I say to every young man and young woman,—but especially to every young man;—Regard piety toward God as a most indispensable pre-requisite to matrimony. To filial piety I know you will not object; nor to benevolence, or a general regard for humanity. But there is a squeamishness abroad among our sex, about female piety, which, though based on a much feebler foundation than the fear of female pedantry, is not without its influence. Depend upon it, such fears are wholly unworthy, and entirely misplaced. No young woman ever loved her husband or children, or the world at large, any less for her love to God; or served others worse for her pledge before God, angels, and men, to serve her Divine Master.

Most young men, who have imbibed the silly prejudice against female piety to which I here allude,—I will not say all, of course, but most,—are among those who, in these days, take great pride in what they call their *liberality* in matters of religious belief.

I will not call them sceptical, for I dislike to make any such charge against the whole class. Besides, the word sceptic does not mean much. Every one is disposed to regard those who *believe less* than himself, as sceptical, and every one who *believes more*, as bigoted. But there is a very large and increasing class in our country, especially in our large cities, who belong to the class of *liberals*; and whose reading, for the greater part,—and they are generally great readers,—is almost any thing else rather than what will lead them to respect or love woman, or her and their Heavenly Father.

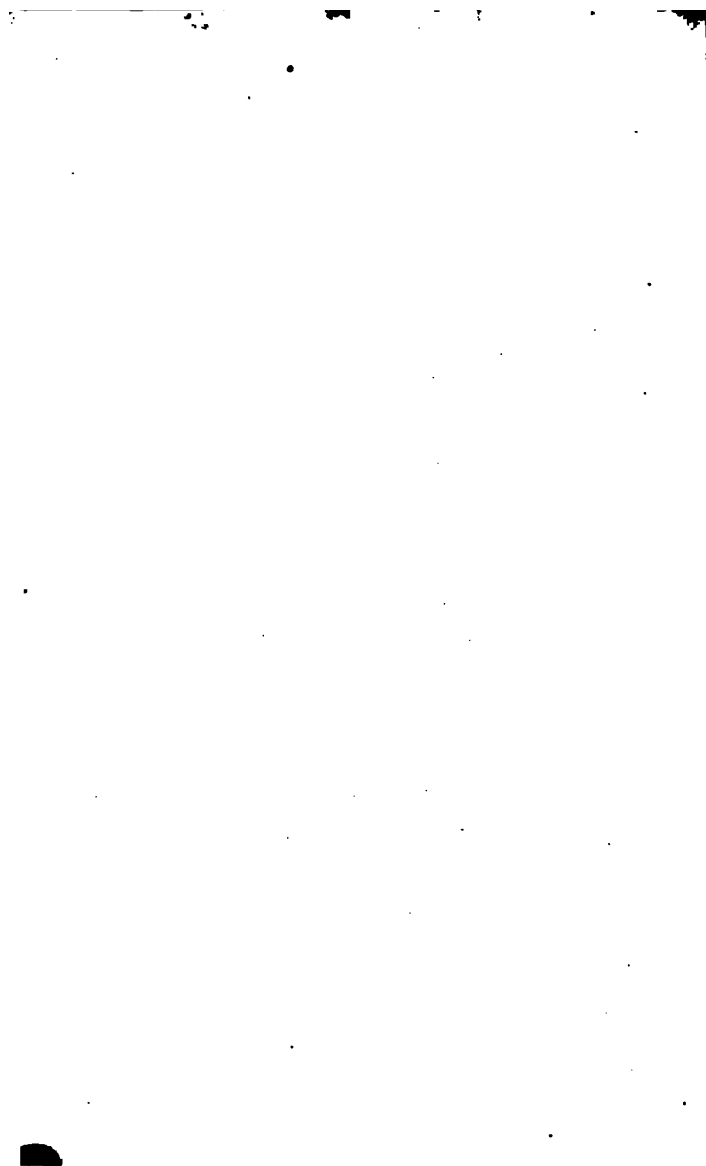
Let me say to young women, in particular: In your estimate of character and in your final choice, be not a little solicitous to avoid committing yourself, for life, to these very liberal people,—so much wiser, as they may seem to be, than all the generations that have gone before them, and the multitude with whom they are at present commingled. Be sure your acquaintance is thorough, not to say of long standing. A mistake in this matter is not so very easily rectified. The engagement is for life,—perhaps for eternity.

That there is much illiberality in the world will not be questioned. Nay, more, I am glad when I find a truly liberal mind, and sincerely and deeply sorrowful when I meet with a bigot. It is true, Lord Bacon has said that the veriest superstition is better than no religion at all; but one who has reflected and ob-

served much, will be slow to indorse an opinion quite so liberal, though it should be that of my lord Verulam. For one free thinker who has shot beyond the line of safety, however, I must still insist that we have quite a large number who do not think at all. Let us have thought, and let it be free, manly thought. But let reason be enthroned, supreme ; and not fancy and an unbecoming credulity.

THE END.





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JUL 2 1953



